

# Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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## Guy F. Hershberger at Ninety

*There is reason, once again, to celebrate. Ten years ago we worked hard on preparing "An Evening with Guy F. Hershberger," in honor of his eightieth birthday, December 3, 1976. It was the American Bicentennial year as well, when the Declaration of Independence was the major focus of national interest (1776-1976). Hence, it also seemed right and expedient to produce a volume of essays, Kingdom, Cross and Community (Ed., J.R. Burkholder and Calvin Redekop), a Festschrift honoring Guy F. Hershberger, the time of publication to coincide with his eightieth birthday. The volume has held up well as a companion piece to the Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision (Ed., Guy F. Hershberger) — the one, concentrating on the sixteenth century, and the other, on the twentieth century of our experience together as a people.*

*But that all happened ten years ago. In 1986 it was felt that once again there was reason to celebrate. A college convocation was planned at Goshen — the institution that Guy himself helped to mold over the decades since the 1920s. Don Blosser, Ed Metzler and J.R. Burkholder were asked to reflect on the theme, so close to Guy's own heart: "Toward the Year 2000: War, Peace and Nonresistance." Blosser reflected on the Goshen College perspective; Metzler, on the Mennonite Church perspective; and Burkholder, on the North American and global perspectives.*

*John Fisher, who had introduced the speakers, then completed the celebration by acknowledging Guy's presence along with his wife, Clara, and children, Elizabeth and Paul. The student body broke into applause, climaxed with singing Happy Birthday.*

*Following convocation, Leonard Gross interviewed Guy, in part, about his response to the messages of the three speakers. The Goshen College Record appropriately granted coverage to the event, two days later.*

*The ideas generated through this process are highly significant, both as a barometer of where Mennonites stand in 1986, as well as a reminder of where we have come from, but equally important, where we are headed. And here, we all can take heart — and hope — in the role model of Guy F. Hershberger himself, who ends his interview, admonishing us to get on with the business of the kingdom.*

— Leonard Gross



Guy F. Hershberger, on his ninetieth birthday, December 3, 1986.

### **Toward the Year 2000: War, Peace and Nonresistance — and Goshen College**

by Don Blosser

I am wondering if you have done your Christmas shopping yet. Or whether you've even thought about what you're going to get your little brother or sister or your child. If you haven't decided yet, perhaps you should take a quick stroll through Sears or Wards or K-Mart or Toys-

R-Us and see what's available.

Because if there's any connection between what small children play with today and what grown-up adults are going to play with twenty-five years from now, we're in big trouble. Toy departments today, in my judgment, bear a striking resemblance to a Pentagon warehouse for Reagan's Iranian foreign policy. You can walk down through these long aisles of battle fatigue garments. You can buy authentic Rambo guns which go "RRRRRRRRRR" and shoot sparks that will blast the enemy to bits, guaranteed on the box. There are new laser guns by which you can

immobilize the worst enemy alien or the little boy down the street — it doesn't matter. You can buy G.I. Joe complete weaponry with authentic weapons that cannot be distinguished from the real thing.

Now one worries about these things when you remember that Proverbs 22 tells us that the way you train a child is the way he's going to act when he gets older. I heard just last week Al Cohn, the President of Coleco which makes Rambo, say that laser guns and Rambo hand grenades are not in fact violent toys. It depends on what the child does with the toy. That makes it violent. I sat there

wondering, does that mean that I should buy some Rambo hand grenades because I have a daughter who plays tennis, and if she runs out of tennis balls she can use the hand grenades instead? What else do you do with a hand grenade? What else do you do with a Rambo rifle that shoots sparks? What else do you do with the kinds of things that are being sold? It doesn't make sense, at least not to me.

And maybe that's the issue as we look at peace. What is it that makes sense? President Reagan approaches the war/peace issue on a very pragmatic basis. What do we have to do to make the world safe for Americans? It appears that truth and integrity are principles that can be sacrificed in order to make the world safe for us. Jerry Falwell does basically the same thing on the basis of religious principle. What do we have to do to make the world safe for Christians to preach the Gospel? It doesn't matter if the way you make the world safe is in defiance of the very Gospel you preach.

What makes sense?

Years ago, when I was a student at Goshen College, I had a professor who kept asking those kinds of questions in a different way. This prof wanted to know, in the midst of a world intent on going to war, how do you respond to the will of God? He and others were very influential in keeping alive the concept that peacemaking is not rooted simply in the economic structures, or in the political decisions that are made in the world, but peacemaking is rooted in your response to a God who is by nature a God of reconciliation. And Guy Hershberger worked at the task of being a peacemaker, developing it out of our understanding of the nature of God, and then moved from that into: how does one do that in the political, economic, social realm?

There's a story that was circulating here when I was in school. I don't know if it's true or not, but that doesn't matter. Fictional stories sometimes communicate as much truth as true stories. I was told that

Guy Hershberger was having an extended correspondence with a modern contemporary theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the leading theologians of the day. And I was also told that one day someone asked Reinhold Niebuhr why he bothered writing to this obscure teacher in a small little Mennonite college out in northern Indiana. Niebuhr's response was, "This obscure teacher at that small Mennonite college makes more sense than anybody else I'm writing to." Well, I think he's right. We're called to be peacemakers, not because that gives us political clout in the world so that we can clobber everybody else into submission, but because we believe that peace is God's way, which comes out of the nature of who God is and who God would call us to be.

Guy Hershberger is still around and is still trying to make sense. Fortunately, in our day, he's joined by some other people who are also trying to make sense, people like Ron Sider, Henry Nouwen, Bishop Gumbleton, Tom Sine and others. But our discussions of peace in our own circles here become significant because they're rooted in our understanding of God, not in how to manipulate the world.

## Toward the Year 2000: War, Peace and Nonresistance — Implications for the Mennonite Church

by Edgar Metzler

In June of 1960, in the basement of the Plains Mennonite Meetinghouse, near Lansdale, Pennsylvania, a committee of the Mennonite Church was considering a bold new statement to be presented to the next session of the General Conference which would meet in the summer of 1961. The Peace Problems Committee had drafted a statement on the Christian Witness to the State. The idea that the church would have anything to

say to the state about its policies or how it conducts its affairs was controversial, as it still is for some people.

The controversy now is not *if* the church should address the state, but what the content of that witness should be — whether we take our cues from Jerry Falwell or Jim Wallis.

In 1961, however, most Mennonites did not believe that the church should be telling the government what to do, except in those situations where we had a chance to remind them that we could not fight in their wars, and to plead for the best case for our young men caught in the draft.

So the problem for the Peace Problems Committee was how to get this new statement accepted by a skeptical constituency. The statement introduced a new theological basis for Mennonites to justify and motivate a more active witness to the state, a witness that would go far beyond the modest request for recognition of our own rights of conscience to a wide range of peace and justice concerns.

The secretary of that committee meeting in the basement of the Plains Church suggested a solution: attach the new statement to the well-known and widely accepted statement on nonresistance which had been adopted by the denomination ten years earlier. Thus the new would be hallowed by the old and familiar, and become more acceptable. He even found a phrase in the old statement which in passing referred to "our obligation to witness to the powers-that-be" and this became the anchor for the new thrust in Mennonite political witness. So instead of a totally new statement which would stand out by itself and thus be more vulnerable to criticism, the statement became Part II of the already accepted statement and was duly accepted the next summer.

The secretary of that committee was Guy Hershberger. I was impressed, as the youngest member of that group, by the fusing of the old and the new. But it was not just a tactic to

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win the acceptance of the conference, although it served that end. It was typical of a stance that I learned to appreciate about Guy Hershberger, and I might characterize it as: "build on the past, push toward the future." Perhaps this combination of the old and the new was even symbolized by Professor Hershberger's style of dressing, which I marveled at when I first came to Goshen College because I had never seen it before: the traditional plain coat, but underneath it, and hardly concealed by it, a necktie!

Hershberger wrote his *War, Peace and Nonresistance* in the midst of World War II to give the church a firm foundation of the biblical faith that impelled them to resist the nationalistic violence of the time. But it didn't stop at simply shoring up the traditional doctrine. And anyone who wanted comfort simply in that would be disappointed and discomfited, because it was a call to a whole way of life, pointing beyond a mere negative refusal to participate in military violence. In the last part of that book, the author begins to suggest some of the many new frontiers of social witness where action for peace would take traditional believers of nonresistance into new and uncharted challenges.

Now, some read *War, Peace and Nonresistance* as an uncompromising ethic, irrelevant to the problems of modern society. But the thoughts and actions of the author of that book had the opposite effect on me. In the early sixties, Guy Hershberger was pushing me toward becoming a Christian activist. Now don't blame him for that! But for many of us in that generation he gave us a sense that the traditional doctrine provided a solid base for addressing the ambiguities of power in the modern world.

For anyone who wants to recapture a sense of what was happening then, I would suggest that you look up the 1960 volume of the *Gospel Herald*. Guy Hershberger had 26 articles that year. Some were laying the groundwork for the more aggressive witness to the state I've already referred to; some were trying to bring some sanity and perspective to the anti-Catholic sentiment which was widespread during that year of John Kennedy's presidential campaign. Another series made a powerful statement against the death penalty.

A major share of those 1960 writings were about race relations.



Ed Metzler (l.), Russel Liechty and Don Blosser, congratulate Guy F. Hershberger on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday celebration at Goshen College, after the convocation held in his honor.

Despite Hershberger's critical analysis of nonviolent resistance in *War, Peace and Nonresistance*, he spoke appreciatively of Martin Luther King's "voluntary non-cooperation campaign" as he once described it. He reminded us that there are unjust laws which Christians cannot obey, and he suggested that we should reflect on what it means to be a martyr church.

I've been thinking about this as we prepare for a meeting in mid-December where a hundred persons from Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups will gather in Chicago to consider the proposal for Christian Peacemaking Teams — teams who would be trained to interpose themselves between parties in conflict, a really radical new suggestion that Mennonites begin to adopt the methods of nonviolent direct action.

If I understand correctly the basic thrust that began with *War, Peace and Nonresistance*, and expanded it out to all these other applications of what it means to be a loving disciple of Christ in the world, I believe Professor Hershberger would applaud the concern to be involved in the world's struggle for justice.

Nonresistance never meant non-involvement; but involvement is very demanding and disorienting. An appreciation of our rootage in creation, in Christ and in the church will guide and sustain us as we push toward the

future. We are thankful for role models who have shown us how that can be done, with wisdom and with grace.

### Toward the Year 2000: War, Peace and Nonresistance — North American, and Global Perspectives

by J.R. Burkholder

Before I dare to try and project us toward 2000, I have to reflect on my own involvement with Guy F. Hershberger and *War, Peace and Nonresistance*. I think I met the book before I came to know the man, though both became important to me in my college and seminary years, the late 1940s into the early 50s. My copy of the 1944 edition has a penciled price of \$2.35; the current Herald Press price for the 1969 revision is \$15.95. That's almost 600% increase. I wonder what Guy is doing with the royalties!

Guy gave my generation a book on practical Christian ethics that, along with H.S. Bender's "Anabaptist Vision" and J.C. Wenger's work in biblical theology, provided a framework for life and work and ministry in a revitalized Mennonite

church that was moving out of relative rural isolation into bold new mission and service activity.

Although I never had Hershberger as a teacher, Guy did much more for me than the book, important as it was. During my college senior year, he provided an opportunity that, as I look back, marked the opening into the kind of ecumenical peace activity that has been one of my chief interests ever since. In April 1952, Guy encouraged a carload of us from Goshen to attend the "Christian Youth Conference on War," a nationwide gathering at Columbus, Ohio. There I heard major speakers from other churches, leading pacifist thinkers such as George Gibson, John Oliver Nelson, and A.J. Muste, and learned that Christian opposition to warfare was not just a Mennonite peculiarity. That encounter began my lifelong involvement with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, including a period of staff work in Philadelphia (1958-60).

Now certainly not everything that became part of my agenda, as I worked with various streams of pacifist thought and action over the years, fit neatly with the *nonresistance* concept as Guy first elaborated it. But one of the fine things about Hershberger is his openness to new truth. Although his earlier writings made a sharp distinction between the Mennonite ideal of nonresistance, based on the text in Matt. 5:39 and Gandhian nonviolent resistance, Hershberger later came to appreciate much of the nonviolent philosophy and strategy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His abiding concern for justice, as expressed in *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations*, enabled him to see the positive aspects of this approach to social change and civil rights.

And I trust that Hershberger would approve the newer understandings of the original Sermon on the Mount text "resist not evil." Actually these represent an older, more authentic interpretation, based on rigorous historical and contextual research. Nonviolent action as a response to evildoers is a distinctive "third way," neither violence nor submission, neither fight nor flight, but a genuine creative nonviolent alternative that reclaims the initiative for active peacemaking. This view is set forth brilliantly by Walter Wink in *Sojourners*, December 1986.

But we're expected to look toward the year 2000. And the first thing to

say is that we're not likely to get there, unless the world decides to pay more attention to Hershberger and his kind! While no one likes to be a prophet of doom, I've studied enough of the literature on the probabilities of nuclear blowup, by design or accident, or the likelihood of some other devastating global disaster, to recognize that the odds for survival are not good, in human terms.

But of course as students of GFH and followers of Jesus, we're not limited to human historical predictions. And the good news is that the message is indeed getting out, that in the last two decades Christian pacifism has gained significant new credibility in many circles. Some items:

The American Catholic bishops, in their pastoral letter on nuclear war, set forth nonviolence as a genuine option for faithful Catholics — a decided break with the classic just war tradition.

Evangelical groups and publications, such as *Sojourners*, *The Other Side*, and Evangelicals for Social Action are encouraging a new look at biblical pacifism.

Major Protestant denominations — Presbyterians, United Methodist, the United Church of Christ — have launched aggressive peacemaking programs of study and action.

And recently a concerned Methodist bishop called a convocation of denominational leaders to consider dramatic new peacemaking initiatives.

At a personal level, I have greatly enjoyed the opportunities to be a kind of Mennonite peace ambassador to other church circles, both in Texas for the 1982-84 period, and now with the MCC peace office. It's encouraging, for example, to meet with the head of the International Affairs office of a major denomination, and hear her tell me that she really is a "closet anabaptist!"

Can we get safely to the year 2000? The task of peacemaking is awesome as we face the stubborn problems of human history and rebellious human nature. But as people of faith, who have heard the call of Jesus to the new way of the kingdom, we are set free from cynicism and despair and violence that mark our world, and learn to live by faith and hope and love.

## Guy F. Hershberger: On the Occasion of his Ninetieth Birthday

### An Interview

**Leonard Gross:** Today is December 3, 1986, exactly ninety years since Guy Hershberger was born. I am here with Guy Hershberger to discuss two major areas: your response to this morning's chapel; and some reflections on a few of your major contributions to the church in way of writing since 1927. About this second area, I have singled out from your many articles and books, over a period of six decades, that classic essay, "False Patriotism," published in 1927. For the thirties, I note your concern for liberalism, and the question whether it is able to carry our peace witness. In the forties, *War, Peace and Nonresistance*, and your concern for Mennonite community need mentioning. Then in the fifties, *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations* was a highly significant contribution. In 1976 you became "object" and recipient of the Festschrift, *Kingdom Cross and Community*, on the occasion of your eightieth birthday. And now in 1986 you are working on yet another volume with the working title, "Called to Maturity."

But before we take up some of these ideas and their times, we might first ask you to respond to this morning's chapel: how do you respond to Don Blosser, Ed Metzler and J.R. Burkholder?

**Guy F. Hershberger:** Oh, they were all very kind. I was quite pleased with what they had to say. Don Blosser's point on war toys was very important because children see them on television, and I think it's atrocious. I agree with him 100 percent — 200 percent if necessary!

That story he told about Reinhold Niebuhr, I had never heard before. But one time, when I was making application for a research grant, I had to give persons as references. And I wrote to Niebuhr and asked him whether he would be willing to support my application for the grant. And he came right back with a letter and he said, I'll support you on any research project that you ask me for.

**Gross:** How about Ed Metzler? He mentioned how earlier on we didn't have the feeling that we should be

telling the state what to do. And then, in the sixties, there was a bit of a shift on that — that Ed Metzler was saying that you went along with. I don't know if that's worth responding to or not.

**Hershberger:** Oh, yes, that's very good. And he was correct on that when he spoke of that meeting of the Peace Committee and who drafted that statement on "Witness to the State." One New Testament scripture in support of this position that I have used often and over the years, especially since about the time that this statement was being drafted, is Ephesians 3:10. The background of it is Ephesians 2, where the author speaks about our citizenship being in heaven, and then Ephesians 3:10, that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God may now be made known to the principalities and powers.

**Gross:** The idea of the colony of heaven is pretty significant for you.

**Hershberger:** Yes. Our citizenship is in heaven. Another text on this is Philippians 3:20. Moffatt translated this as "colony of heaven." The church is a colony of heaven.

**Gross:** J.R. Burkholder then talked about the odds being against us. He also noted some reason for optimism, that there's reason to hope. How do you respond to the odds being against us in regard to war?

**Hershberger:** Well, Burkholder mentions the fact that the Catholic Church — the Catholic bishops of the church here in America — has come out very strongly in matters of peace and social concerns, and the evangelical churches as well — many of them. Take for example Fuller Seminary, or the Deerfield, Illinois group, Sojourners, and many others. We therefore have many hopeful things. But of course we also have many on the other side — which is not so encouraging.

**Gross:** What is the carrying power of peace? Wherein does it lie?

**Hershberger:** With those who hold to the Gospel, and preach the gospel of peace as it is presented in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the writings of Paul, and of Peter, and others. And to the extent that the gospel of peace is presented and lived, there is hope. And along with it, we have the witness directly to the powers-that-be as well as the witness in what we say and do and so on.

Individuals can make their con-

tribution, in this regard. But the important thing is for the Christian church, for the body of Christ, to act unitedly. The church must be a witness unitedly. To the extent that it doesn't, of course, there's a weakness. Not all Christians do this. But a church holding to the gospel of peace in word and in deed is of the essence.

**Gross:** Let us shift to the whole of your lifetime of service to the church, going back to the 1920s. You're the one who has been actively helping things to happen, both in writing, but also in committee work, and as a professor here at Goshen College. And I see your 1927 *Mennonite Quarterly Review* essay, "False Patriotism" as a powerful testimony to peace during that decade, and indeed, ever since. It is also a message for the eighties. So already in the twenties you were getting things to happen through the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*. You were saying things that most other people were not saying. I don't know where you got your ideas. I don't know your motivation. I do know that you were writing a master's thesis on Anabaptism. But what led you to write "False Patriotism"?

**Hershberger:** I got started writing on this peace theme due to the stimulation that came from Orrie Miller. I came here in 1925 to Goshen, began teaching history, just a young fellow who had just got a master's degree, and one quarter at the University of Chicago beyond that, and Orrie Miller was a member of the Board of Education. So he often stopped at Goshen because of his connections with Goshen College there.

Now in 1925, at the Mennonite General Conference at Eureka, Illinois, in 1925, there was appointed a new Peace Problems Committee, they called it. The Mennonite Church had so many problems — they always were talking about problems! And he became secretary of that Committee.

So when he stopped at Goshen in probably October, 1925, in addition to his other business that he was doing on the campus, he got in touch with me and mentioned the fact that he was secretary of this new Peace Committee, the Peace Problems Committee. And he said, I've begun to work on this a little bit, and recently I was at a peace conference. (I don't know whether it was in Washington or Philadelphia or New

York, I'm sure it was one of those three — and it was some ecumenical church group. And in the 20s there was a pretty strong emphasis on peace in the ecumenical movement. It was a reaction to what had happened during the World War I when the churches had sold out too much.) Orrie Miller then continued, they had at this conference a large table with all kinds of peace literature, and I looked that over and I couldn't find one piece of Mennonite peace literature. And it's time that we're getting started producing some. And I came to ask you if you would be willing to do something about this?

I agreed that I would see what I could do. That was the beginning of it. At that time, there were also, during the twenties, representatives of the Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren and the Quakers. And they would have a meeting maybe once a year to discuss the whole question, what can we do? What ought we to do? And so on. And Orrie Miller was a leader in that. And I began attending those meetings, so I got ideas there.

This group came to be called the Historic Peace Churches. It had another name earlier but it ran through the twenties and thirties and right up toward World War II. Later on it was called the Conferences of the Historic Peace Churches.

The farther we moved in the thirties — you see, Hitler became the ruler of Germany — the more and more it began to look like war. And so our Peace Committee began to have conferences of their own, in addition to these Historic Peace Church Conferences. And then in 1935, early in the year, there was a conference right here at Goshen. It was a weekend conference. I think it started on Friday and ended on Sunday: In case of war what shall we do? What can we do? This was discussed by the Historic Peace Church Conferences and the Mennonites were doing it within their own group. The Brethren and the Friends were doing the same thing. At this conference in 1935, I was asked to prepare a paper on the subject, "In Case of War, is Alternative Service Desirable and Possible?" And I prepared the paper and I said it was desirable, and it was possible — so I believed.

Of course, that very question reflects our experience in World War I where we were not adequately prepared. The Mennonite Church

was not adequately prepared, neither were the Quakers nor the Brethren. And men were drafted and went into the army and then they had to take their position — if they were conscientious objectors, they had to state their position there. There were many Mennonites and Quakers and Brethren and many other denominations that were not known as peace churches, but there were members of the churches and certain outstanding ministers that had that experience during World War I that they were interested in this.

After this conference, all three of the groups began to work on this question: If war comes again, what can we do to have alternative service? I remember in some of those meetings of the Historic Peace Churches there was a considerable amount of pessimism. They would remind us of what happened during World War I, what happened to some of the fellows in the camps. Some of them were sentenced to Fort Leavenworth — military barracks — and actually there were four of those men, Hutterites, that were tortured, and then were in cold damp cells. They got pneumonia and two of them lost their lives by that process.

There were a few people that were very fearful that in case of another war, it would be worse. I remember Dan West, of the Church of the Brethren. He said, "What will they do with us? They may take us out and shoot us." I still remember him saying that, just like that! And so, really, we were working on this.

Of course, as it turned out, instead of the situation being worse for the conscientious objectors in World War II than it was in World War I, it was better. But one of the reasons it was better was because we were prepared. Long before we got into the war, as soon as the draft bill was passed in September 14, 1940, I believe it was, there was adequate provision in the law for conscientious objectors. It provided that they could be assigned to civilian service for work of national importance, or something like that. During all of that time, I was at practically all of those meetings.

Let's backtrack a moment. After the conference here in 1935 where I had that paper on "Is Alternative Service Desirable and Feasible?", Clayton Yake, who was editor of the paper at Scottdale, the *Youth's Christian Companion*, came to me and said, I'd like to have you write articles for

the *Youth's Christian Companion*. So I began to send him one or two and I think I kept that up for five years. Those articles were gathered together and printed in book form, called, *Can Christians Fight?* Those articles ran from 1935 to 1940, I believe. There's a copy in the library, I'm sure, and the footnote would always say when this appeared in the *Youth's Christian Companion*.

In the meantime, I was writing other things. I was doing what Orie Miller said. I would attend various meetings. Some meetings I attended and then wrote a report on it. Other people were also doing it. Edward Yoder was also asked to do writing of this kind and he did. Of course John Horsch was writing on the peace question too, along with other things, so literature was appearing. Somewhere along the line, in the thirties already, I was asked to write a study booklet that could be used in classes. It took me until 1944 to complete this assignment, in the form of a book, *War, Peace and Nonresistance*.

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**Gross:** You are an historian probably more than anything else, also in the field of Christian ethics. What is the role of history for us?

**Hershberger:** Well, the Bible is history. It's the history of salvation, the Old Testament and the New Testament and it comes on down. The Christian church has had its ups and its downs. Finally the state took it over, beginning in about A.D. 300, down to the Middle Ages and all that. So there had to be the Protestant revolt and the Anabaptists. And we have that heritage. We must hold on to that heritage and make it relevant from generation to generation.

**Gross:** The gospel of peace is central to that, right?

**Hershberger:** Peace is at the heart of the Gospel.

**Gross:** And the Christian community is where that is nourished. Now am I reading you correctly there?

**Hershberger:** That's right.

**Gross:** But we need to be bold enough to witness to this message of peace and assume that something of it might catch on in general society. Respond to that.

**Hershberger:** That's right.

**Gross:** That's something of the Quaker vision, but it's also compatible with the Mennonite vision.

**Hershberger:** Yes. There are a lot of good things within Quakerism, but

I'm a little bit concerned about some of the Quakers.

**Gross:** Wherein lies your concern there?

**Hershberger:** Well, there are some of them of course that have forgotten about the pacifist stance, that don't hold to it anymore. But some of them who do are not giving it the biblical basis that I'd like to see. So we must be sure that we don't lose that.

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**Gross:** Are you hopeful for the Mennonite Church right now?

**Hershberger:** Yes. I'm by nature an optimist. That keeps one working. It keeps one going. There are times when anyone of us can complain, and slow down in the work of the kingdom. We need to counter this in ourselves, and in others. We need to quit complaining, and work together.

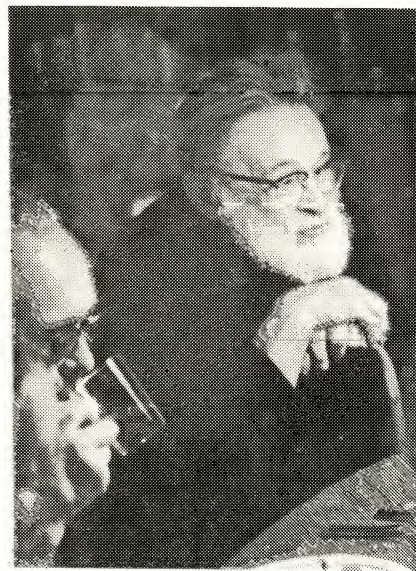
**Gross:** So we keep on working.

**Hershberger:** Yes, we quit our complaining, and we try to work harmoniously, for we've got to get on with work of the kingdom.

## Anabaptists in Tirol

As part of the Jakob Hutter Year (1536-1986), commemorating the year that Jakob Hutter died for his faith in Innsbruck, Austria, a symposium was held at St. Lorenzen in South Tirol (today, part of Northern Italy) from September 4 to 6, 1986.

The symposium was definitely a first of its kind, where in a strongly Catholic land, the local and regional



Hans Meier, Hutterian spokesman at the Hutterian Symposium at St. Lorenzen.



The town of St. Lorenzen, South Tirol, birthplace of Jakob Hutter, early leader of the Hutterian Brethren.

leaders, political and educational, decided to celebrate "Täufer in Tirol" ("Anabaptists in Tirol"), in the very place that Jakob Hutter was born, at St. Lorenzen.

The following headline appeared in *Dolomiten*, the paper of the area, in its September 5-6 edition: "Hutterian Conference Arouses Great Interest: Scholars and Historians in St. Lorenzen on the Trail of the Anabaptists in Tirol." The conference was planned by the South Tirol Cultural Institute, the Tirol Historical Society, the town of St. Lorenzen, and the German Mennonite Geschichtsverein (Historical Society), the latter, asked to invite a scholar to speak on the theme, "Die ketzerischen Lehrmeinungen der Täufer" ("The Heretical Beliefs of the Anabaptists"). Gary Waltner, of the Geschichtsverein, invited Leonard Gross of Goshen, Indiana, to carry this assignment.

Ten Hutterites from North America were also present, including Hans Meier from Deer Spring Bruderhof (Norfolk, Conn.), who during the last session responded eloquently to questions raised, including the question of the nature of personal freedom. Bernd G. Längin, (Winnipeg) author of the new volume, *Die Hutterer (The Hutterites)*, presented the story of the Hutterites in North America in the form of slides.

All other participants were from Europe (Austria, South Tirol, Italy and Czechoslovakia), the program including: Johann Rainer (Innsbruck), "Religious Movements and Tolerance in the Holy Roman Empire of the Sixteenth Century"; Gretl

Köfler (Innsbruck), "Regional Aspects of Tirol Anabaptism"; Matthias Schmelzer (Bruneck), "Jakob Hutter's Influence in the Light of Confessions of Faith of Imprisoned Anabaptists"; Leonard Gross (Goshen, Indiana), "The Heretical Beliefs of the Anabaptists"; Heinrich Noflatscher (Bozen), "Governments, and Heresy, at the time of the new Revolt of the Anabaptists, on the Basis of the Sources"; Heide Dienst (Vienna), "Witch Hunting in Tirol in the Early Modern Period"; Gerd Staffler (Bozen), Film, "Among the Hutterites, 'For a Dollar a Month'"; Aldo Stella (Padua), "Effects and Lines of Development of Hutterian Anabaptism in the Italian Religious Groups which lay outside of Catholicism"; Jaroslav Pánek (Prague), "Anabaptism in Moravia in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries"; and Bernd G. Längin (Winnipeg), "The Hutterites in America" (Slide Presentation).

The mayor of St. Lorenzen, Burgomaster Oswald Galler, opened the Conference, expressing his hope in the form of a reconciling admonition with a view to effecting an ever greater tolerance for those who think in different patterns from one's own. In the case of the Hutterites, he suggested, much can be learned about the ways of true peace, about the dangers of materialism, about solving the current widespread identity crisis throughout Europe, and in all this, about the search for those things that remain as abiding.

Leonard Gross closed his address with the following tribute to the

450-year-old tradition that is the legacy of Jakob Hutter (here, in English translation): "With good reason, we look to the Hutterites, in this year of celebration of the martyr death of Jakob Hutter, as one of those tiny minorities that has made a difference in the course of human events. Man would be the worse, were there not such groups in this world to suggest a quality of life, lived as something other than a fairy tale, and as an actual possibility here and now, within a realm called the kingdom of God. For in their common life the Hutterites live out, daily, with a certain degree of success, the certain art of human relations."

## Conversations with Elizabeth Bender V

### On the Mennonite Church During the Past Twenty-Five Years: Gleanings of Elizabeth Bender's Ideas (19 February 1981)

*In my earlier discussions with Elizabeth Bender, before we began to record our conversations on tape, I would take notes. The five points that follow are my notes of our discussion of February 19, 1981.*

—Leonard Gross

1) Research over the last number of years has been less scholarly than it had been a quarter-century ago. There is much statistical information coming out, these days, but the interpretive side seems to be less well thought through.

2) We need both brotherhood, and brotherliness (using traditional terms). We talk about brotherhood, and write about it; we also practice brotherliness through warm caring for others.

3) The nature of the Mennonite Church since 1960:

a) Today, there is a general acceptance of education.

b) There are fewer hobby horses being ridden. In the earlier decades of the century, some of the hobby horses were dress and humility. The bonnet continued well into the forties. Humility, a theme that began probably around 1850, continued well into the twentieth century. During this era, many sermons came out

of Lancaster County on the theme of pride.

c) There is more brotherhood today.  
d) There is definitely more interaction among various Mennonite groups.

4) The present shape of the Mennonite Church, in its current movement and signs of change: We need to ask ourselves whether we are becoming more and more general Protestant, and if so, is it all a total loss? Should we all be "one"? Beliefs on the other hand become so thinly spread out.

5) On nonresistance: Nonresistance is by no means a hobby horse for North American Mennonites. In fact, nonresistance is the one tenet of our faith that would prevent our merging with the many other groups and denominations who do not hold to this tenet of faith.

## Book Review

*Why Do They Dress That Way?* By Stephen Scott. Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 1984. Pp. 160. \$5.50.

Author Stephen Scott is well-qualified to answer the question posed in the title of this volume. Stephen came to faith in a Missionary Baptist church in southern Ohio, but had been attracted from boyhood to the Plain People. Eventually his interest in the latter led to his affiliation with the River Brethren of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Interestingly and significantly, this step did not constitute in any sense a rejection of his experience in the Baptist church, but rather a step forward in his spiritual pilgrimage.

Much that has been written about the Plain People has been outsiders looking in on them, often outsiders who had earlier seceded from some body of Plain People but who had retained some considerable appreciation for their spiritual roots. But in the case of Stephen Scott, who came from the outside and joined one of the segments of the Plain People, the steps have been reversed.

Scott's study is thorough, meticulous, and exhaustive. This evaluation applies equally to his historical research and to his in-

vestigation of recent and contemporary life-styles of various Plain Peoples. He is also convincing when he proposes that "dress is a language" (Chapter 1) which separates, identifies, and expresses loyalty to the body of which one is a part. For the Plain People it expresses commitment to the biblical principle of nonconformity to the world as well as to the biblically endorsed virtues of humility and modesty.

Of particular interest to the historically minded person are the author's identification of some "good times" (e.g., the 1840s and to some extent the Victorian Era in the latter part of the nineteenth century) and of "immoral times" (e.g., the 1820s and 1830s, and 1920s). This thesis could bear further study. The section on "The Midwest Amish Pattern of Change" (pp. 38-40) outlined so very descriptively what this reviewer has

experienced in part as a midwestern Mennonite with nineteenth century Amish roots and what he has observed among those groups which have deviated more recently from the Old Order Amish tradition. The case study of the erosion of clear-cut standards of dress at Lancaster Mennonite High School will no doubt have a similar effect on readers from Lancaster County.

Perhaps the weakest part of the author's case may be found in his attempt to bridge the gap, both in terms of historical sequence and logically, between the more widely accepted principles of simplicity and modesty and the observance of a minutely delineated dress code. Nevertheless, all those who wish to know "why . . . they dress that way" will find this work very enlightening.

— Paton Yoder,  
Goshen, Indiana

## John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest Report

1985-1986

### Class I (Graduate and Seminary)

- First:** "A Case Study of National Socialism Among Foreign Germans: Paraguay, 1927-1944," by John D. Thiesen (Wichita State University).  
**Second:** "Convictions Beneath Church Discipline in Pilgram Marpeck, John Calvin and the Swiss Brethren," by Steven G. Gehman (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries).  
**Third:** "An Analysis of Sixteenth Century Interpretations of Ephesians 4:11 and Related Texts," by Simon Pellew (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries).

### Class II (College Juniors and Seniors)

- First:** "J.E. Hartzler: The Change in his Approach to Doctrine," by Janeen Bertsche (Bluffton College).  
**Second:** "What Mennonites Have Been Saying About Catholics," by Janeen Bertsche (Bluffton College).

### Class III (College Freshmen and Sophomores)

- First:** "Inter-Mennonite Cooperation and the Mennonite Church of Normal," by Scott C. Stalter (Bluffton College).  
**Second:** "Calvary Mennonite Church: A Unique History," by Deb Stenson (Bluffton College).  
**Third:** "Meidung: The Amish Practice of Social Avoidance," by Greg Wilson (Bluffton College).

### Class IV (High School)

- First:** (Tie between:) "Goshen Mennonites in Witness for Peace," by Ron Krabill (Bethany Christian High School) and "Witnessing to the Grace and Truth of Christ: The Faith Journey of Christine P. Weaver," by Leisa A. Kauffmann (Bethany Christian High School).  
**Second:** "History of the Gama Mennonite Church, Gama, D.F. Brazil," by Richard Lee Hochstetler (Bethany Christian High School).  
**Third:** "WMSC in the College Church: 1925-1975," by Kris Peachey (Bethany Christian High School).



# Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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## Clarence J. Ramer Tribute to a Mennonite Statesman

Clarence J. Ramer was born May 30, 1905 in Martinsburg, Pennsylvania, to Henry B. and Mary Durr Ramer. At the age of four his family moved to Altoona, Pennsylvania, where his father worked as a machinist in the railroad shops. From these childhood days Clarence recalls: "The many steam locomotives created a soot smog so that nearly every time you would blow your nose you would have soot in your handkerchief. This was an unhealthy situation and we were almost continually sick, catching all the children's diseases. My father was determined to move to the country." In 1917 that desire became a reality when his father followed his brother Sam in moving to Duchess, Alberta.

Life was not easy as a pioneer in Alberta. At that time the land around Duchess was open range. Crops had to be protected from roaming herds of cattle and horses. He recalls: "The road to Duchess was only a trail that went in and out between telephone posts." His Uncle Sam built the first set of farm buildings in the Duchess district in 1915 and his wife had to bake bread in a cardboard box. Irrigation was a necessity in that area, but didn't arrive until 1918. "Fills had to be built with four horses, a fresno [apparently a local term for what is also called a floater or leveler; its purpose was to level the ground so that the water would not drain away] and the spade. What a difference. With our modern machinery today it would have been easy, but then it was real drudgery. We need to take our hats off to those who stuck with it."

Clarence became quite fascinated with horses. He learned to ride bareback, rope cattle from horseback, and break horses. Once he received a colt for a winter's work. With this colt he felt he could do most anything. He remembers one experience when he was breaking a horse for Hugh Forster: ". . . I led him around the corral several times,

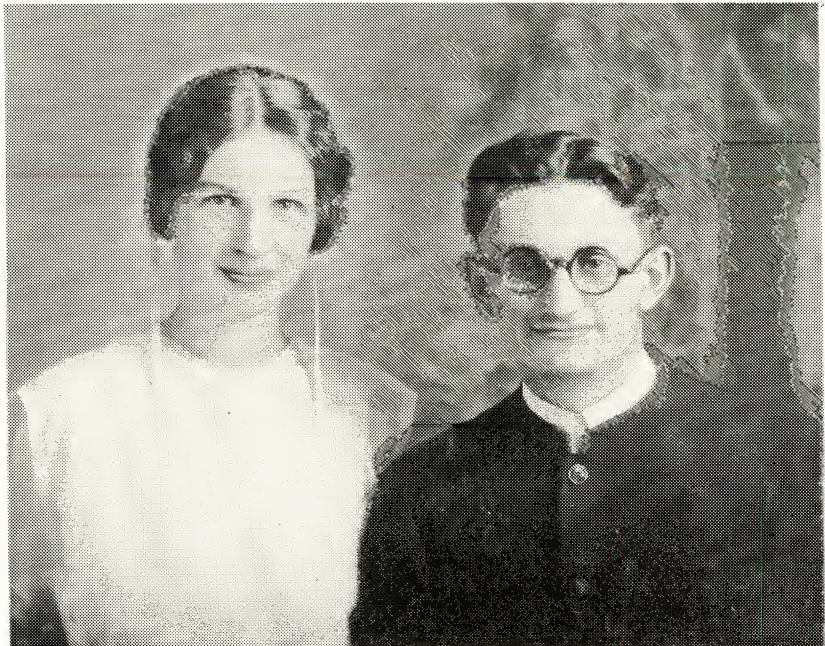
so I thought he was ready to take outside and lead around. But a little whirlwind brought a piece of paper just as Hugh came riding up. The horse scared and tore loose, galloping away across the prairie kicking as he went. I jumped on my saddle horse and took after him, who by that time was over a quarter of a mile away. There was not very much rope dangling out from behind his back foot, but riding up close I reached down, grabbed the end of the rope and dallied it around the saddle horn. As I drew back the horse took a somersault. From that time on the horse would lead and Hugh praised me for the act." Clarence had become a regular cowboy.

In 1926 Clarence went to Eastern Mennonite School in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Classmates' letters reveal that he was quite popular, fun-loving and appreciated for his Christian living. At least several people felt that he was a person in whom they could confide and seek counsel. Teachers and administrators also thought

highly of him. All were disappointed when he had to return home in 1928 due to the accidental death of his brother, John.

In 1929 he was ordained to the ministry by lot, beginning a lifelong service to the church. Apparently, he was fulfilling a boyhood dream. His mother recalls: "At this time Clarence's hobby was playing church. One day he was playing church on the porch when two men tramps came up and wanted something to eat. Grandma said, 'Come up and sit down till I get your lunch ready.' Clarence made use of this opportunity. He picked up his Bible and started to preach to these fellows. When Grandma appeared he was giving them a real sermon. One said, 'Pretty good for a little boy.'"

In 1931 he married Ethel Martin of Duchess. Looking back, he felt: "It was a bold move with conditions as they were." Despite the poor economy, Clarence did quite well. In 1940 he started a dairy. In 1965 the dairy had grown to about fifty cows,



Wedding Day (April 26, 1931) of Clarence Jay Ramer and Ethel Rachel Martin of Duchess, Alberta.



C.J. Ramer, standing (in 1943) beside his loaded Fargo pickup.

and he received a trophy for the best improved herd in Alberta agriculture. Perhaps most of the credit is due Ethel, since Clarence was quite often away from home with his involvements in church work.

In 1934 Clarence was instrumental in the start of Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference's Winter Bible School. The school would meet for three weeks each at three different locations so that more people could attend. Apparently, this was for youth and adults alike. He organized and taught in the Winter Bible School for many years.

In addition to his duties as minister and organizer of Winter Bible School, he often had duties for the Alberta-Saskatchewan (A&S) Conference and the Mennonite Church General Conference. He was moderator of the A&S Conference for many years and served on various committees for the Mennonite Church. One of his concerns was missions. He took a leading role in helping to establish Sunday schools in Alberta. He also traveled at times to give evangelistic revival meetings throughout Canada and the United States.

He has worked in various capacities as an educator. In addition to WBS he taught at the Hesston Winter Bible School in 1946-47. He was principal at Western Mennonite

School for two years, 1956-57. From 1970 to 1979 he taught at Rosedale Bible Institute in Irwin, Ohio. Many of his classes dealt with the theme of the Tabernacle and Jewish forms of worship, which culminated in a book entitled, *God's Unfolding Plan* published in 1984.

Peacemaking was evident in Clarence's life, even from his childhood days. His mother remembers: "When he and the boys played, and if anything crossed their

path, rather than quarrel Clarence would say, 'You can have it. I give up.' He always showed a peaceable attitude. He didn't like fighting." During World War II he sent many packages of aid to war victims. He actively represented his brother-in-law, Samuel V. Martin, who was imprisoned for his refusal to bear arms. As a leader in his conference, he was often called upon to mediate when problems arose. He was an active peacemaker.

Clarence still resides in Duchess in a new home he and Ethel built for their retirement. He is the father of seven children, all of whom are married and live in Alberta.

*The Clarence J. Ramer Collection (9 1/4 linear feet) consists of Northwest Conference (earlier, Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference) and Mennonite Church General Conference materials, sermon and class notes, and correspondence. Some of the more interesting units are: 1) Samuel V. Martin (World War II jailed conscientious objector) correspondence; 2) Robert Greig (overseas missions worker) correspondence; and 3) Stirling Congregational Affairs (a Hutterian congregation that had joined the Conference for a time).*

— J. Kevin Miller



Allensville (Pennsylvania) Bible School, 1933. The three teachers: Clarence J. Ramer, standing in back row, second from right between J.L. Stauffer and J.B. Smith. One of the students, Barbara (Mrs. Elam) Peachey noted the following about this school: *Front row* (right to left): Anna French, Miss Byler, Frances Zook, Thelma Umble, Hannah Kauffman, Barbara Peachy, Fannie Zook, Lorrie Yoder, Ruth Baer. *Second row*: Katie Yoder, Ruth Acherman, Mildred Byler, Mary Yoder, Myrtle Metzler, Amanda Byler, Mary Kanagy, Mabel Hummel, Anna Lauber, Ruth Hummel. *Back row*: J.L. Stauffer (Harrisonburg, Virginia), C.J. Ramer (Canada), J.B. Smith (Ohio), Aaron Beachey, Irvan Roth, Levi Mast, Harold Esh, Urie Peachey, Elam Peachey, (?) Hartzler, Clarence Walters, Milo Peachey, Norman Yoder, (?) Spangler, Effie King, Fred Yoder, (?), Mabel Yoder, Anna Graybill, Jacob Mast, David French, SOLLIE Yoder. Fourteen strangers, twenty-four home folks, and three teachers.

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## Silvanus Yoder: Mennonite Layman and Farmer

By Paton Yoder

Silvanus Yoder (1873-1963) was never ordained to the ministry, never served in a church school, was never a missionary in the formal sense, and was not even a prominent church-wide or congregational leader. Yet he made certain contributions to the Mennonite Church and served that denomination in ways which were significant.

**Youth and Education.** Silvanus grew up in the shadow of the Oak Grove Amish Mennonite Church in Wayne County, Ohio. He was a member of a large class of 42 young people who were baptized in the spring of 1890.<sup>1</sup> The baptismal pledge left a deep, life-long mark upon this conscientious, seventeen-year-old youth. Silvanus understood this commitment as being primarily to God, but his life-long loyalty to the church of his youth proved to be second only to this higher loyalty. He must have acquired much of this spirit of allegiance to his church from his father, who had remained almost fiercely loyal to Bishop John K. Yoder during the troublous years of 1887-89 at Oak Grove, in spite of the fact that he disagreed with the bishop's conservative ideas.<sup>2</sup> Silvanus' rigid and somewhat simplistic opinions of what was right and what was wrong may have reduced somewhat his influence and usefulness to the church in later years.<sup>3</sup>

Silvanus may also be identified with that group of Oak Grove young people who broke through the barriers which had previously prevented almost all Amish Mennonite youth from pursuing their education beyond grade school.<sup>4</sup> With a hint of self-criticism Silvanus later reminisced that he entered Smithville Academy in the fall of 1892 "with a full and overflowing measure of self-conceit."<sup>5</sup> After a winter at Smithville and possibly an additional term in the fall of 1893, Silvanus followed his ambitions to Ohio Normal University at Ada, Ohio.

As to his admitted "self-conceit" when he entered Smithville

Academy, Silvanus may never have been able to divest himself entirely of this trait. Later, on the farm, he was want to poke fun at the neighbors who planted their potatoes in the "dark of the moon," or who powwowed for their children's ailments. At church services he found it difficult to tolerate a stumbling reading of the Scriptures or an uninformed interpretation thereof. And he gave the impression that he thought his sons and daughters were a little better, or at least better behaved, than other children. While Silvanus' attitude was not expressed in blatant arrogance, neither was it so covert that his brethren in the church did not sense it. This trait probably limited his acceptance by the brotherhood throughout his life.

In July of 1895, after four ten-week terms at Ada, Silvanus terminated his studies at Ohio Normal. As he bicycled out of Ada, headed for Topeka, Indiana, he dismounted and took a last nostalgic look behind him; evidently it was not in his mind ever to continue his education further.<sup>6</sup> Melvin Yoder, Trustee of Eden Township, Lagrange County, Indiana, had promised him a teaching position in a country school. Apparently Silvanus would be content with that kind of a future. He may never have qualified as a college teacher for other reasons, but in thus terminating his education he was separating himself from his Oak Grove contemporaries who later came to teach at Goshen College, at Bluffton College, and elsewhere.

**Farm and Church.** If Silvanus had thoughts of continuing his education at any time after that July day when he left Ada, they must have been smothered by his marriage to Susie Troyer on Christmas Eve, 1896. Now he must win the bread, presumably by teaching school. But teaching proved not to be to his liking and there was really only one alternative, that of farming.

In January 1903, Silvanus and Susie, now with two small children, bought a farm midway between

Goshen and Middlebury, Indiana. While this purchase already required the assumption of a large debt, it was only months later that their financial resources were stretched further when their house and barn burned to the ground. There was to be no quitting, however; if Silvanus wavered, Susie did not. Within four years a new house and barn had been built and two more children had been born to them.<sup>7</sup> A fifth child was to arrive in 1912.

During the twenty years which followed the purchase of the farm and the ordeal by fire, the demands on Silvanus' energy were enormous; yet he found time to serve his church to a surprising extent. Even earlier, before the purchase of the farm, he had served as Sunday school superintendent for a year at the Clinton Frame Mennonite Church and soon thereafter he had served in the same capacity, for the same length of time, at the Forks Church.<sup>8</sup> He attended regularly with his family Sunday school and church services, the Sunday evening Young Peoples' meetings, and midweek meeting when such was scheduled. He usually taught a Sunday school class. He diligently attended revival meetings, sometimes at neighboring churches as well as at his own church. He attended faithfully the Indiana-Michigan Sunday School Conference, held each August. He also went to the Church Conference, a June event, but a little less regularly. At least such was the pattern in 1910 and thereafter, the year when he began to keep a diary.<sup>9</sup> During these strenuous years, as throughout his life, he served his congregation whenever called upon. Except for his early experiences at Clinton Frame and the Forks, he never held a major office in his home congregation. However, he served on a variety of ad hoc committees, such as those to select books for the new library and to plan Sunday school and Mission Day programs. He helped to prepare the church grounds for the conference tent and he hauled sand when the

church was remodeled. A greater challenge came to him when he was chosen to lead a series of midweek meetings in the study of the book of Daniel.<sup>10</sup>

From year to year it became increasingly evident that, to Silvanus, the farm was not an end in itself, but a means to an end. The farm merely provided the economic base for the members of the family while they took every opportunity to engage in what were considered to be more worthy enterprises. Silvanus' motives in thus subordinating farming were probably several. In the first place, he felt strongly his obligation to the church; but it may be too that the memory of Ada was haunting him. He had begun to write poetry while in school there and in 1902 one of his hymns, "Some Time We'll See," put to music by Chauncey J. King, found its way into the *Church and Sunday School Hymnal*.<sup>11</sup> In 1912 another hymn, "I'll Meet You in the Morning," with music by the same composer, appeared in the July-September issue of the *Advanced Sunday School Quarterly*.<sup>12</sup> At about the same time Silvanus began to write short articles for the *Gospel Herald*, two appearing in that publication in 1912 and another in 1913.<sup>13</sup>

In these same years Silvanus was a principal participant in the launching of a new church-related venture, the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Aid Association. Begun in 1911, this organization proposed to insure the Mennonites of said states against property damage by fire or storm. A committee composed of Ira Johns, Simon Yoder, Silvanus, and others met a number of times that summer. They drew up a constitution and some rules and regulations, elected Silvanus to be secretary, published their regulations as required by law, and began to enroll church members in their organization.<sup>14</sup> Within a few years this Mennonite Aid Association was insuring most of the Mennonite property owners within the states of Indiana and Michigan.

In terms of function and responsibility, Silvanus should have been called *Executive Secretary* of the Association. He calculated the premiums and mailed the notices to every member, and the local or congregational directors reported primarily to him. By the mid-twenties he was spending the equivalent of a month per year in the

work of the Association. Only in 1916 was he allowed a stipend (of \$70 per year at first), as the principal working officer of the organization.<sup>15</sup> At the time of his retirement in 1948 he had served the Association for thirty-eight years. Silvanus seems to have enjoyed this work, even though remuneration was at first nil and never lucrative. Sometimes Susie thought it took precedence over farm work and home improvement.



Susie and Silvanus Yoder at their home, "Eight-Square Farm," located between Goshen and Middlebury, Indiana, November 1933.

As the second decade of the century neared its close, Silvanus' interest in farming waned progressively. By that time only a small fraction of the farm debt remained, and the pressures to mind the farm were thereby likewise reduced. That he was really not a very successful farmer, compared to his contemporaries and especially to his own father, may account further for his diminishing enthusiasm for farming. Actually, it might have been the reverse; his interest in writing and in working for the church may have detracted from his interest in the farm. Or maybe it was the doldrums of middle age and the realization that escape from farming must be now or never.

**Daniel Kauffman.** In any event, at this time Silvanus made a sustained effort to change vocations. It is

not surprising that he sought a church-related assignment at the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania. His attraction to Scottdale can be explained very easily. With the encouragement of Editor Daniel Kauffman he had become a frequent contributor to the *Gospel Herald*. In addition to the articles mentioned earlier, three more appeared in 1916, four in 1917, six in 1918, seven in 1919, and twelve in 1920. In 1917 Editor Kauffman began to list Silvanus Yoder as a Contributing Editor on the paper's masthead, and in 1918 he was appointed a member of the church-wide Publication Board under which the Publishing House at Scottdale operated.<sup>16</sup>

But it was not to be so. Publishing House officials made it clear to Silvanus that he could not support his family on Scottdale wages. There may have been other reasons why he was discouraged from making the move. And Susie never was enthusiastic about it.<sup>17</sup>

So be it. If he was to stick to farming he was prepared to do so, although he continued to be discouraged with the fruits of his labor. And if he was not to serve the church by working at Scottdale he would go on doing so from his farm base. He gave more and more of his attention to the Mennonite Aid Association. And he continued to write articles for the *Gospel Herald*. Beginning with "Keeping the Lord's Day Holy,"<sup>18</sup> in 1912, and concluding with "Shields of Brass,"<sup>19</sup> in 1940, Silvanus eventually contributed a total of 129 articles to that paper. It seems probable that this figure was (and is) an all-time high for any single contributor of articles to the *Herald*.

Silvanus and Daniel Kauffman were personal friends, a relationship which Silvanus cherished greatly. In his correspondence with Silvanus, Kauffman consistently made favorable comments about Silvanus' contributions to the *Herald*. As late as October 24, 1938, he wrote to Silvanus thanking him for his recent article and adding that "whenever you have any more such gems sticking in your system, cough them up and send them to Scottdale."<sup>20</sup> But changes were in the offing. Two years later, Kauffman found it necessary to tell Silvanus that the editorial staff of the *Herald* had decided to drop the

names of the Contributing Editors from the masthead of the paper. This did not mean that Silvanus' articles would no longer be welcome; on the contrary, "so long as I am on the editorial staff," Kauffman said, "you are welcome to the columns of the *Gospel Herald*, as well as welcome in our home."<sup>21</sup>

Silvanus had one friendly tiff with Daniel Kauffman. It related to an article authored by Bishop Noah Mack which had appeared in the December 25, 1930, issue of the *Herald*. It had first been printed in the *Sword and Trumpet* but now it had been submitted to and accepted by the *Herald* staff at the request of the bishops of Lancaster Conference. Entitled, "The Situation in American Mennonitism,"<sup>22</sup> the article severely criticized the Mennonite Church in general and Goshen College in particular. Silvanus was offended. Already four of his children had graduated from Goshen College, the fifth was in attendance there, and he had served on its local board since 1922. Quickly he fired a letter back to Kauffman, somewhat retaliatory in nature, alluding to a Lancaster County scandal which had come to his ears and noting that Lancaster Mennonites raised tobacco. But his primary complaint was directed at Kauffman for printing such a controversial article, and this in violation of Publishing House policy.<sup>23</sup>

Kauffman must have answered Silvanus' letter instantly, defending the printing of Mack's article. "Before admitting Mack's article," he said, "we weighed all sides of the

issues involved and the probable results, and finally decided that the course we pursued would be the best and wisest course under the circumstances." He admitted that the *Herald* staff had a policy of rejecting highly controversial articles but it also had a policy of publishing articles when submitted by "official request," in this case by the Lancaster County bishops. The latter policy had obtained in this case. Kauffman was hopeful that the long-term effects of the article would be beneficial. In that event, said he, the old adage, "all's well that ends well," would apply.<sup>24</sup>

Kauffman's letter didn't satisfy Silvanus. In particular his attempt to be somewhat jocular by quoting Shakespeare was not very convincing. Quickly Silvanus wrote a pithy article for the *Herald* in which he took a sly dig at Kauffman (which would not be caught by the readers) and at his proverb, and then went on to disparage, quite discretely, current congregational and denominational disputings. The statement, said Silvanus, simply isn't true. When two boys slug it out, get themselves all muddy, tear each other's clothes, and then at the end shake hands and make up (as seen in a well-known cartoon of that day), there follows the extra washing by the mother and the purchase of new clothes by the father. Ergo, all is not well "that ends well."<sup>25</sup>

Kauffman accepted the article quickly and graciously, commended Silvanus on its content,<sup>26</sup> and entered it in the February 12, 1931 issue of

the *Herald*. That ended the tiff. Perhaps "all's well that ends well" was more applicable to the Kauffman-Yoder dispute than to the larger church controversies of that day.

— To be continued

Notes

1 James O. Lehman, *Creative Congregationalism; A History of the Oak Grove Mennonite Church in Wayne County, Ohio* (Smithville, Ohio, 1978), 116.

2 Paton Yoder, *A Yoder Family History; Jacob, Samuel, and Jonathan* (Goshen, Ind., 1980), 41.

3 Throughout this article subjective evaluations of Silvanus' character and inner motivations, such as the one made here, are the collective opinion of his children.

4 *Creative Congregationalism*, 134-36; Silvanus Yoder, "Pioneer Mennonite Students at Ada, Ohio," *MHB* 3 (March, 1942), 3.

5 Silvanus Yoder, "Autobiography," manuscript of 30 pages, unnumbered, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana (hereafter, AMC). This document has been reproduced in Paton Yoder, *Silvanus and Susie* (Goshen, Ind., 1982), pp. A-2 to A-29. The quote may be found on p. A-19.

6 "Autobiography," in *Silvanus and Susie*, pp. A-22 - A-23.

7 "Autobiography," in *Silvanus and Susie*, pp. A-25 - A-26.

8 "Autobiography," in *Silvanus and Susie*, p. A-24.

9 Silvanus kept a diary from 1910 until his final illness in the summer of 1963. Generalizations in this article about his activities and his attendance at church-related meetings are made on the basis of a careful study of these "Diaries." They may be found in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

10 Silvanus Yoder, *Diary*, 1919; entry for March 2.

11 *Church and Sunday School Hymnal* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1902), hymn no. 345.

12 *Advanced Sunday School Lesson Quarterly* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1912), 6 (July-Sept.), 56.

13 *Gospel Herald*, 5 (1912-13), 146-47, 290, 810.

14 *Diary*, 1911; entries for June 19; Aug. 1, 11, 29; Sept. 12, 23; Oct. 11, 12, 25.

15 *Diary*, ledger entries in the back of each diary for January in the years 1916, 1917, 1918.

16 See the masthead of the *Gospel Herald* for 1917 and 1918.

17 The account of Silvanus' interest in moving to Scottdale is based largely on the reminiscing of his children in July and August, 1981. It is likely that his efforts peaked in May 1920, when he made a trip to Scottdale and appeared before the Executive Committee of the Publication Board (*Diary*, 1920; entry for May 13).

18 *Gospel Herald*, 5 (1912-13), 146-47.

19 *Gospel Herald*, 32 (1939-40), 1097-98.

20 D[an] K[auffman] to Silvanus Yoder, Oct. 24, 1938, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

21 Daniel Kauffman to Silvanus Yoder (card), June 28, 1940, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

22 Noah H. Mack, "The Situation in American Mennonitism," *Gospel Herald*, 23 (1930-31), 818-19, 826-28.



Left to right: Rhea Yoder, Fyrne (Miller) Yoder, Joanne Yoder, Jonathan Yoder, Silvanus Yoder, Phyllis Yoder, S.A. Yoder, Ethel (Oyer) Yoder, Hazel (Smucker) Yoder and Paton Yoder at their Middlebury home, 1937.

## Birkey-Landes Cemetery Rededication, November 1986

*On Sunday, November 9, a cemetery rededication service took place at Morton, Illinois. The Birkey-Landes Cemetery outside Morton had been dormant for about 75 years. The First Mennonite Church of Morton decided that the cemetery merited a "face-lift." There were about fifty people who paid their respects near the grave of Joseph Hochstettler, who died in 1851, the first to be buried in this cemetery.*

*Below is a list of those who were buried in the cemetery, and whose names are identifiable. (It has been a number of years since the Mennonite Historical Bulletin has been informed of this type of activity. The Archives of the Mennonite Church continues to be interested in any new activities that uncover any and all aspects of our past, including cemetery plats and the story that accompanies the lives of each and every person who has lived, and died, as part of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. We are grateful to Donald F. Roth, 249 Baltimore Ave., Morton, Il 61550, for his work in making this event possible, and for sending to the Archives of the Mennonite Church this important information. The MHB welcomes further communications about these areas.)*

— Leonard Gross

The Birkey-Landes Cemetery is located in Tazewell County, Illinois in NW-NE¼-Sec.1. On July 25, 1864, Andrew and Catherine Birkey sold 51½ acres to Joseph Landes, saving and excepting a burying ground containing one half acre, more or less. The listing below is of identifiable persons buried there.

### Augsburger,

Jacob, father - 1824 - 21 Feb. 1869  
Barbara, mother/wife - 1829 - 21  
Mar. 1911

Daniel - d. 15 July 1861, at 25 yrs.  
Christian - d. Mar. 31, 1872, at 20  
yrs.

### Birkey,

Christian - d. Dec. 15, 1861, at 48  
yrs.

Elizabeth - w/o Christian - d. 14  
July 1878, at 20 yrs.

Catharine - d. 24 Aug. 1870

### Birky,

Valentine - 1791 - 12 Sept. 1860  
Joseph - d. 28 Mar. 1861, at 3 mo.

### Eigsti,

Christian - s/o C. & C. - 15 Jan.  
1864 - 27 July 1872, at 8 yrs.

Susan - w/o Joseph - 1837 - 27 July  
1877

Barbara - w/o G. - d. May 25,  
1887, at 40 yrs.

Lizzie - w/o G. d. June 27, 1881,  
at 36 yrs.

Mary - 1881 - July 18, 1881, at 6  
weeks

### Gerbler,

Nicholaus - 1815 - 27 Aug. 1876,  
at 61 yrs.

Jacobina - d. 21 Aug. 1877, at 62  
yrs.

### Heiser,

Jacob - 1817 - 24 Dec. 1877, at 60  
yrs.

### Hochstettler,

Joseph - d. 29 Apr. 1851, at 56  
yrs.

Jakobina - d. 7 Dec. 1856, at 52  
yrs.

### Kinsinger,

Sarah - 1870 - June 21, 1891, at 21  
yrs.

Johnnie - 1875 - Jan. 26, 1880, at  
5 yrs.

John - 1815 - Oct. 1900, at 85 yrs.  
Barbara Wagler - 1839 - Oct.  
1902, at 63 yrs.

### Orendorf,

Daniel - d. July 27, 1872, no age

### Ropp,

Catherine Birky - w/o Joseph - d.  
Mar. 18, 1870, at 44 yrs.

### Schertz,

Henry - d. 1864

### Shafer,

Hulda - 1815 - 27 July 1876, at 61  
yrs.

### Stecker,

Josephina - d. 9 Nov. 1867, at 1  
yr.

### Steinman,

Jacob - d. 19 Mar. 1865, at 63 yrs.

### Sutter,

Johann - d. 2 Aug. 1887, at 91 yrs.  
Barbara - w/o J., d. 10 Sept. 1884,  
at 85 yrs.

### Unzicker,

Benjamin - s/o D. & B. - d. Apr.  
1861, at 2 yrs.

### Ueberrhein,

Jacob Stephan - s/o J. & T. - d. 10  
May 1865, at 3 weeks

### Weberg,

Johann - d. 12 Sept. 1867, at 70  
yrs.

Anna Marin - 1864

23 Silvanus Yoder to Daniel Kauffman, Jan. 1, 1931, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

24 Daniel Kauffman to Silvanus Yoder, Jan. 3, 1931, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

25 The article was entitled, appropriately, "All is Well that Ends Well," *Gospel Herald*, 23 (1930-31), 986-87.

26 Daniel Kauffman to Silvanus Yoder, Jan. 13, 1931, in the Silvanus Yoder Papers, AMC.

## News and Notes

A volume on the history of the Pikes Peak area of Colorado was recently published by Ivan W. Brunk, a Mennonite Historical Association member (Little London

Press, 716 East Washington Street, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80907), entitled: *Pike's Peak Pioneers* (64 pages). It is "a history of the little-known settlements on the east face of America's best-known mountain" and it sells for \$3.95. It is the engaging story of an era that began after the Civil War, that slowly faded after the 1920s, and that now has all but been forgotten. Ivan Brunk has amassed the known pieces of this regional history into an interpretive whole, which even includes the wanderings of Professor Willard H. Smith (Goshen College) in 1914.

— Leonard Gross

The following microfilms are made available for purchase through the Mennonite Library and Archives of Eastern Pennsylvania:

- 1605 letters (1861-1912) sent to preacher Jacob Mensch on 6 rolls 35mm microfilm — \$160.00

- 657 letters (1848-1940) to four Mennonite families of the Franconia Conference area. Also the will of Deacon Rudolph Landes, 1801, and Land Drafts, 1832-1835. All on 3 rolls 35mm microfilm — \$80.00.

- Indexes available for both of the above groups.

- Eastern District Conference Constitution and Minutes (1847-1900),

and Skippack Congregation Alms Book (1738-1954). Both of these in the original German script. Ministerial records of Rev. Joseph Hendricks, pastor of the Trinity Christian Church, Freeland (Collegeville), Pa. (1864-1904). All on one roll 35mm microfilm — \$30.00. Shipping costs additional to above quotes.

For further information and ordering contact: Mennonite Library & Archives of Eastern Pa., 1000 Forty Foot Rd., Lansdale, PA 19446.

## Correspondence

Val Swartzendruber, St. Lawrence, South Dakota, November 23, 1986. After hearing from you in July, I subscribed to the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* and received the January, April and July issues. I really didn't know there was such a publication, and I enjoyed reading them so much. Some of the articles were so very interesting.

Those articles and the interview with Elizabeth Bender are so outstanding because she covered so many years, and could picture the church through those years. The Mennonite Church owes much to Harold S. Bender and his wife, historically.

The 1896 address by John S. Coffman was so very scholarly for being given at that time. I have long ago read everything I could about that man. It seems God raised him as a voice at a time when our church was at a low ebb.

Then Paton Yoder's article about eternal security in the *Herold der Wahrheit* was so informative. I of course was interested in knowing that my grandpa, Friedrich Swartzendruber, wrote about these things.

I don't know if it will ever happen, but sometime I would enjoy spending some time with you and the Archives. The Amish Bishop, Jacob Swartzendruber, that Harold Bender describes in a booklet, was my great-grandpa.

The main reason for this letter was to let you know that I enjoyed and appreciated your efforts in putting out the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*.

## Book Reviews

*Three Mennonite Poets: Jean Janzen, U.S.A.; Yorifumi Yaguchi, Japan; David Waltner-Toews, Canada.* (Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 1986). Pp. 122. Hardcover: \$13.95; Paper: \$8.95.

It may take heaven for Mennonites to appreciate poetry but here is a hint, sedately bound with the correct number of end papers and proper amount of white space from the Mennonite cultural tastemakers, Good Books. *Three Mennonite Poets* takes poetry by Mennonite poets from its humble role as filler in church publications to serious literature. And like all serious literature this poetry reflects experiences both personal and universal. Thus, poets Mennonite have something to say about things religious, but make no claims to be teacher, preacher, or historian.

In Jean Janzen's poetry small epiphanies are distributed like communion wine. The laden quantities are what have her attention: the "vast / fields that lie between us" in married love, the craving of mother love that wants to "eat the spaces between us" instead of "curbing the appetite" that is true nurturance, and the intergenerational burdens of memory that beg a harvest with the "chaff all blown away." Janzen's poetry has no chaff, so that the history of her Ukrainian Mennonite forebears in the early 1900's is 52 cinematic lines. Her poetry is deep dish, deeply satisfying yet the stuff that makes one yearn for more.

In Yorifumi Yaguchi's poetry the ironies of earth-bound people who are only ephemerally transcendent is given form. Thus what comes after "my prolonged prayer" is temptation in the shape of a pig-like beast, "the incarnation / of what had secretly been hiding deep within me." Likewise, in unguarded moments an absolute pacifist finds himself "humming / to myself a military song / learned when I was a child."

Yaguchi's lean fierce images take one close to the raw panic of living and the losses that humans incur through acts of separation from each other, nature, and silence. Yet his

poems are oddly comforting because they name the nameless that each human being knows. Reading these poems I felt the poet's voice "Coming toward me as if / from a world a thousand years ago." This is lyrical poetry about process, about setting the stage for transcendence.

The lighter poetry of David Waltner-Toews examines a Russian Mennonite heritage and pacifism also, but this poet's best poems are those about a father and a father's death. The moment of separation of son from father is:

an explosion of ice  
so close  
the cold shards slice  
between my ribs

where he was a black hole  
Sucked toward it I  
am stretched distorted pulled  
apart  
The space is never filled

I felt myself wishing that Waltner-Toews were not so prolific or the editor would have chosen between similar poems such as "Tante Tina's Lament" and "Hanschen's Blues" rather than printing both. Here are poems, sometimes ho hum, sometimes delightful, and sometimes breathtaking.

Hooray for Good Books in bringing us these Mennonite poets clothed as poets and in their poets' minds. My only question: why weren't four, five or six poets chosen? Poets deserve to be known and read for reasons beyond what they represent in gender, nationality, and culture. Will this premier volume be followed by other shiny stones that lead us away from experiencing art as parochial and local history to its real work as seeker and sayer of truth? I hope so.

— Joyce Clemmer Munro

*The Trail to Santa Fe: A Pilgrim's Progress.* By Willard H. Smith. Published by the author (Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526), 1985. Pp. 221. \$9.95.

On October 15, 1986, Willard H. Smith celebrated his 86th birthday. On my desk is his autobiography, *The Trail to Santa Fe: . . .*

Smith, for 39 years teacher of history at Goshen (Ind.) College

(1929-1968), explains in the preface that the title is a "takeoff" on his interest in western history. He adds that Santa Fe means "Holy Faith," which suggests the goal of his pilgrimage.

Willard Smith writes in a light conversational manner about his early years in an Amish-Mennonite family who lived at first on a farm midway between Eureka and Roanoke, Ill. He reviews his life story which included a family stay of some months in Tuleta in southern Texas in 1908; the death of his mother in 1914; a move to La Junta, Colo., in 1914; a return to Illinois late that year; attendance at Hesston Academy and College in Kansas from 1917 to 1921; a rest cure for tuberculosis at La Junta from 1921 to 1923; engagement in 1922 to Verna Graber of Noble, Iowa, and marriage eight years later; the death in 1924 of his father who with his second wife had moved to a farm in southern Michigan; completion of college at Goshen College from 1926 to 1928; a year of graduate study at the University of Michigan; and back to Goshen College where he taught from 1929 until his retirement in 1972.

He dedicates his autobiography to his wife Verna, who also served with him on the Goshen faculty as instructor of Spanish. She was one of nine children, the widely known Chris and Joseph D. Graber among her brothers.

This autobiography is delightful to read with its abundant use of names, places, anecdotes and humorous observations. It should have unique appeal for all those who have roots in Illinois, attended Goshen or Hesston colleges, enjoy travel, or are intrigued with glimpses into a past which is rapidly slipping from our memory.

Several themes seem implicit in this book. One is Smith's warm affection for his and Verna's families, which extends to uncles and aunts and cousins. One of his favorite uncles, the historian C. Henry Smith, appears periodically in his life story. He often speaks of brothers Milton, Tilman and George and of sister Dorothy.

Another theme is his and Verna's love of travel. He takes us on historic trails in North America with history books, memoirs and guidebooks in hand; the Oregon Trail, the road to Santa Fe, the route editor and later U.S. Vice President Schuyler Colfax

took to the West in 1865, the Abraham Lincoln trail from his birthplace in Kentucky to Springfield, Ill., and more.

An additional theme is his love of music, which goes back to an Amish-Mennonite father's fiddle stored atop the kitchen cabinet, to hearing Galli-Curci in Peoria, to a brief exploration of a major in music at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kan., to chairing the Goshen College Lecture-Music Committee which brought musical greats like Marion Anderson, Roland Hayes and Dame Myra Hess to the campus. Among the lecturers he and Verna entertained in their home were Carl Sandburg and Martin Luther King, Jr.

A fourth theme is the satisfaction he has found in being a member of the Goshen College community. This is expressed in the Smith's recent action to endow a scholarship and a chair in American History and Culture.

The autobiography is filled with memorable vignettes: . . . baptism at the age of 11 . . . his mother's slow decline from "consumption" (tuberculosis) before the age of miracle drugs . . . going by train to La Junta as a boy of 14 to hear the silver-tongued orator William Jennings Bryan . . . hearing the sensational series of sermons by Clayton F. Derstine who introduced Illinois churches to "fundamentalism and dispensationalism with all its fine points about the end-times" . . . the terrifying experience of having one's team of horses panic at the sight and sound of an automobile, break into a gallop, and wreck a wagon . . . the disappointment of Willard and J.D. Graber being turned down for overseas service with the newly established Mennonite Central Committee.

We observe the twenty-year-old Willard, then an ardent premillennialist, his theology acquired at Hesston from J.B. Smith and D.H. Bender, seeking unsuccessfully to convert his young friend Harold S. Bender from his amillennial position.

Smith describes his arrival in Newton, Kan., on the morning of Armistice Day, 1917: "Part of the celebration here consisted of dragging behind trucks stuffed-rag dummies representing the German Kaiser, with men sitting on the back end of the vehicles pumping bullets into the Kaiser!"

He relates how in 1920 he attended

at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago the second World Conference on Christian Fundamentals with a star-studded series of speakers: H.A. Ironside, James M. Gray, William B. Riley, R.A. Torrey, and many more. He remembers giving a talk in speech class in 1928 on "Why Al Smith Cannot Become President of the United States." While a graduate student at the University of Chicago in 1932 he attended the Democratic National Convention where Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated on the fourth ballot. Smith is even so bold as to report whom he voted for in the Kennedy-Nixon election of 1960 and the Goldwater-Johnson election of 1964.

Smith writes of college teaching during the Depression years. In 1932 he taught 15-17 hours a semester, served as dean of men, and was a member of four or five faculty committees. We accompany him on his historical research jaunts: to Promontory, Utah, for the 1969 centennial of the completion of the transcontinental railway; to Laguna Beach, Calif., to interview the son of William Jennings Bryan; to an interview with a 90-year old Episcopal priest in Wyoming who had buried Sacagawea, Shoshone Indian, guide to Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-1806. His chapter "Paraguayan Interlude" condenses his book by that title and describes two years of wartime MCC service, 1944-45.

Throughout his autobiography Smith speaks of his faith. In the final chapter, "End of the Trail: Going Home," he writes: "I am an Anabaptist, evangelical, Mennonite Christian. . . . I stem from the peace Anabaptists. I am also a pacifist evangelical with a social conscience, not the militaristic kind without a social concern. I am also a Mennonite who believes in the simple, non-conformed life. Non-conformity was overdone and misinterpreted in its day. But now there is a danger of its passing out and being forgotten." He speaks of his hope that all Mennonites might be brought together.

As Willard Smith begins with quotations from Will Rogers and Mark Twain, he concludes with words from the historian Bruce Cifton, and then adds: "Our hands are still to the plow, our faces to the future, and the best of life is still ahead."

— Robert Kreider



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## The 1688 Protest against Slavery



Three hundred years ago next year, at Germantown, Pennsylvania, Quakers and Mennonites joined hands to protest the "traffik of men-body," then, a widespread reality in many North American colonies. In the name of the Ten Commandments (on adultery, and on stealing), in the name of the Golden Rule of Jesus (Mt. 7:12), and in the very name of Christianity itself, the protesters built their case.

The following classical interpretation of this early slavery protest was published sixty years ago by C. Henry Smith in his Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania in the Eighteenth Century (1929). It remains as one of the best accounts of this momentous event.

The actual 1688 Protest, reproduced below, is also taken from Smith (see pp. 107-10). (Scholars today place the date ["2 month"] as April, since the Quakers at that time began the new year with the month of March.)

There is a definite Quaker connection to this Protest — indeed, the document itself was addressed to the Quakers; there is also a definite Mennonite connection, as Smith elucidates.

Hence with good reason, Quakers and Mennonites may reflect together in 1988, three centuries thereafter, about those con-

cerns that lie at the very heart of human relations, in our ongoing attempts to mold and strengthen the reality of peace and justice near and far, through the way of love and shalom — in line with that great tradition that is the inheritance of all historic peace churches.

*Question: What are the forms of "traffik of men-body" today that we need to counter and protest?*

— Leonard Gross

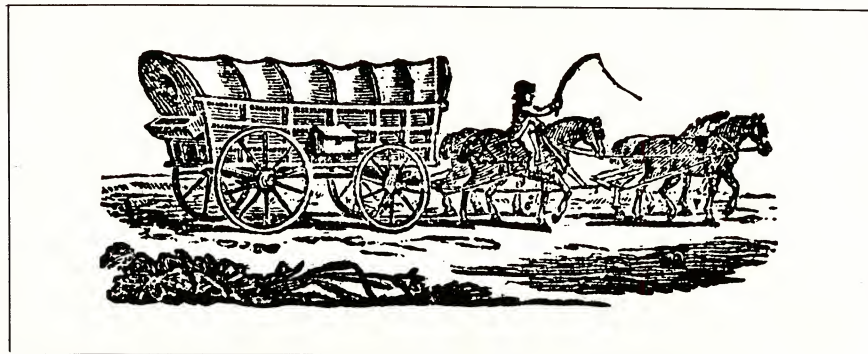
It is but fitting that the Mennonites who in the old world were among the first of modern advocates of entire liberty of soul, should in the new be, indirectly at least, the first to raise their voice in public protest against the bondage of the body. On February 15 [actually, April 15], 1688, four men — Gerrit Hendricks, Derick op den Graff, Francis Daniel Pastorius and Abraham op den Graff met in the house of Thones Konders, it is supposed, and drew up what is usually regarded as the first public protest against the holding of slaves on record in America. The Mennonites of Europe had inquired no doubt regarding the Quaker practise of holding slaves. . . .

[complete text, see page two.]

This document, which appears in the handwriting of Pastorius, was carried by Derick op den Graff to the Quaker Monthly Meeting held at Dublin, (Pa.) on "ye 30-2 mo, of 1688." The Dublin Meeting, however, considered the matter of too great importance to "meddle with it

here" and referred it to the Quarterly Meeting. When the Quarterly Meeting came together in Philadelphia some time later, they too thought it too important to dispose of, and so passed it on to the Annual Meeting; and that is the last action of which we have any record. The Quakers in spite of the valuable service they later rendered the cause of human freedom, were not yet quite ready to declare in favor of total abolition.

Both the Quakers and Mennonites claim the credit for this memorial. To whom is credit due? It is undoubtedly true that at the time three at least of the four and perhaps all of the signers of the document were affiliated with the Quaker congregation. Originally three had been Mennonites and one had been a Lutheran. If the ultimate source of the anti-slavery sentiment which was back of the above declaration is to be sought for then the following facts need to be taken into consideration in any attempt to place the real credit where it belongs. The English Quakers were not yet ready to go on record as favoring the freedom of the black man. The Annual Meeting refused to act on the above suggestion. Quakers still held slaves. As late as 1696 the Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia advised Friends to be careful to bring their slaves to meeting with their masters (see Davis, *History of Bucks County*, p. 795). Mennonites in Europe never held slaves and were officially opposed to slavery in America, and the only case on record of a Mennonite owning a slave is that of Cornelis



## Text of the 1688 Slavery Protest

This is to ye monthly meeting held at Richard Worrell's.

These are the reasons why we are against the traffick of menbody, as followeth. Is there any that would be done or handled at this manner? viz., to be sold or made a slave for all the time of his life? How fearful and faint-hearted are many on sea, when they see a strange vessel — being afraid it should be a Turk, and they should be taken, and sold for slaves into Turkey. Now what is this better done, as Turks doe? Yea, rather is it worse for them which say they are Christians, for we hear that ye most part of such negers are brought hitherto against their will and consent, and that many of them are stolen. Now tho they are black we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying that we shall doe to all men like as we will be done ourselves; making no difference of what generation, descent or colour they are. And those who steal or rob men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not alike? Here is liberty of conscience, wch is right and reasonable; here ought to be likewise liberty of ye body, except of evil-doers, wch is an other case. But to bring men hither, or to rob and sell them against their will, we stand against. In Europe there are many oppressed for conscience sake; and here there are those opprsd wh are of a black colour. And we who know that men must not commit adultery — some do commit adultery, in others, separating wives from their husbands and giving them to others; and some sell the children of these poor creatures to other men. Ah! doe consider well this thing, you who doe it, if you would be done at this manner? and if it is done according to Christianity? You surpass Holland and Germany in this thing. This makes an ill report in all those countries of Europe, where they hear off, that ye Quakers doe here handel men as they handle there ye cattle. And for that reason some have no mind or inclination to come hither. And who shall maintain this your cause, or pleid for it? Truly we can not do so, except you shall inform us better hereof, viz., that Christians have liberty to practise these things. Pray, what thing in the world can be done worse towards us, than if men

should rob or steal us away, and sell us for slaves to strange countries; separating husbands from their wives and children. Being now this is not done in the manner we would be done at therefore we contradict and are against this traffick of men-body. And we who profess that it is not lawful to steal, must, likewise, avoid to purchase such things as are stolen, but rather help to stop this robbing and stealing if possible. And such men ought to be delivered out of ye hands of ye robbers, and set free as well as in Europe. Then is Pennsylvania to have a good report, instead it hath now a bad one for this sake in other countries. Especially whereas ye Europeans are desirous to know in what manner ye Quakers doe rule in their province — and most of them doe look upon us with an envious eye. But if this is done well, what shall we say is done evil?

If once these slaves (wch they say are so wicked and stubborn men) should point themselves, — fight for their freedom, — and handel their masters and mastrisses as they did did handel them before; will these masters and mastrisses take the sword at hand and warr against these poor slaves, licke, we are able to believe, some will not refuse to doe; or have these negers not as much right to fight for their freedom, as you have to keep them slaves?

Now consider well this thing, if it is good or bad? And in case you find it to be good to handel these blacks at that manner, we desire and require you hereby lovingly that you may inform us herein, wch at this time never was done, viz., that Christians have such a liberty to do so. To the end we shall be satisfied in this point, and satisfie likewise our good friends and acquaintances in our natif country, to whose it is a terror, or fairful thing that men should be handled so in Pennsylvania.

This is from our meeting at Germantown, held ye 15 of the 2 month, 1688, to be delivered to the Monthly Meeting at Richard Worrell's.

Garret hendericks  
derick up de graeff  
Francis daniell Pastorius  
Abraham up Den graef

Bom. . . . It is evident that three of the signers of this protest owed their opposition to slavery to their Mennonite training, and the fourth to his Pietistic inclinations; and all of them to their German traditions; certainly not to any encouragement received from the English Quakers. But even

if full credit were granted the Quakers for their protest, Mennonites would still be entitled to an earlier claim. In the Plockhoy Mennonite colony on the Horehill founded in 1663, but destroyed soon after, slavery was prohibited in the fundamental constitution. This, rather

than the protest of 1688 is the earliest recorded instance of opposition to slavery in America.\*

\*The illustrations accompanying this text are taken from the Smith volume.

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**Life in Early Germantown:  
An Eye-Witness Account**

*Cornelis Bom, according to Smith, was the only known Mennonite in Germantown to have owned a slave. Smith quotes Bom, who in these first years was writing back to his Dutch friends across the sea, as follows (p. 91):*

I have here a shop of many kinds of goods and edibles. Sometimes I ride out with merchandise, and sometimes bring something back, mostly from the Indians, and deal with them in many things. I have no regular servants except one negro whom I bought. I have no rent, no tax, or excise to pay. I have a cow which gives plenty of milk, a horse to ride around, my pigs increase so rapidly so that in the summer I had seventeen when at first I had only two. I have many chickens and geese, and a garden, and shall next year have an orchard if I am well, so that my wife and I are in good spirits, and are reaching a condition of ease and prosperity in which we have great hopes. But when we first came it was pretty hard in many respects. Those who come now come in the summer, in what is to be done since now everything can be bought with money. The market is supplied with fresh mutton and beef at reasonable price in a way I would not have thought would have occurred in so short a time. Sometimes there is a good supply of partridges for half a stiver a piece, pigeons, ducks, teal, and fish in great quantities in their seasons. There are not many roads in order to bring to and receive from

market, but these things are now beginning to get in order. In a few years if it continues in the same way every thing will be more plentiful than in other lands. The commerce and trade are close to the door to the Barbadoes, Bermudas and other West Indie islands, that will bring this country into good condition. Time will best show this to be the case. Nevertheless I do not advise anyone to come here. Those who come ought to come after Christian deliberation with pure intentions in the fear of the Lord, so that the Lord may be their support; for before a man here reaches ease he must exercise patience, resignation, and industry the one as much as the other. Therefore whosoever comes here let him come with the constant mind having his eyes fixed upon the commands of the God above him. This none can do except those who have the Lord with them in the matter, and are so cleansed from the fleshly and worldly views and they have good counsel in all things.

**Germantown in 1692**

*By 1692, a short nine years after its founding, Germantown was already producing flax, weaving linen, and making paper — as the following contemporary poem by Richard Fraeme indicates (quoted in Smith, p. 92):*

The Germantown of which I spake before,  
Which is at least in length a Mile or more  
Where lives High German People,  
and Low Dutch  
Whose trade in weaving Linnin

Cloth is much,  
There grows the Flax, as also you may know,  
That from the same they do divide the Tow;  
Their Trade fits well within this Habitation,  
We find convenience for their Occupation,  
One Trade brings in employment for another,  
So that we may suppose each Trade a Brother;  
From Linnin Rags good Paper doth derive,  
The first Trade keeps the second Trade alive;  
Without the first the second cannot be,  
Therefore since these two can so well agree,  
Convenience doth approve to place them nigh,  
One in the Germantown, together hard by.  
A Paper Mill near German-Town doth stand,  
So that Flax, which first springs from the Land,  
First Flax, then Yarn, and then they must begin,  
To weave the same, which they took pains to spin.  
Also when on our backs it is well worn,  
Some of the same remains Ragged and Torn;  
Then of the Rags our Paper it is made,  
Which in process of time doth waste and fade;  
So what comes from the Earth, appeareth plain,  
The same in Time returns to Earth again.



The Mennonite Meetinghouse in Germantown.

## The 1688 Slavery Protest and the Mennonite Connection

Was the protest in any sense a Mennonite expression? Obviously it was more immediately Quaker than Mennonite. Yet not only the op den Graeffs but also Hendricks were of Mennonite background. And reference to European religious persecution as a reason for sympathy with blacks in their oppression surely grew out of Mennonite as well as Quaker experience. It would seem also that British Quakers in the higher Meetings to whom the statement went were not as ready to take up antislavery as were Pastorius and the three signers of Mennonite and continental background. Moreover, apparently at least one of the signers, Abraham op den Graeff, later returned to Mennonitism, becoming a member of Mennonite congregation that emerged at Germantown. According to tradition, in a very old Mennonite meetinghouse in Germantown there still stands a table upon which the protesters wrote their statement. After some years Germantown did get a Mennonite meetinghouse. A permanent and definitely Mennonite congregation slowly emerged.

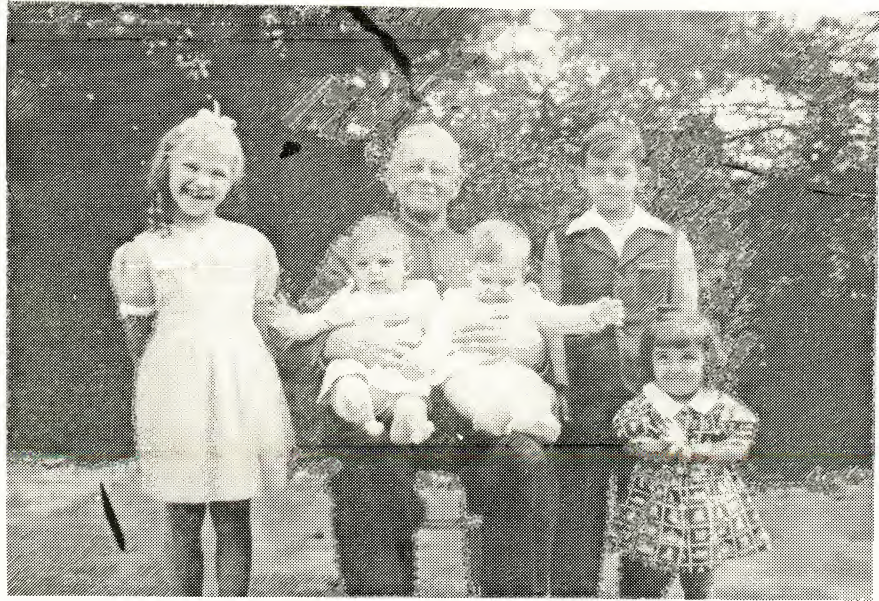
—Richard K. MacMaster (in: *Land, Piety, Peoplehood* [Herald Press, 1985], p. 43)

## II. Silvanus Yoder: Mennonite Layman and Farmer

by Paton Yoder

**Goshen College.** Silvanus' personal attachment to Daniel Kauffman and the Publishing House was second only to his support of Christian education in general and of Goshen College in particular. But there is not a shadow of doubt about the one, two order of his loyalties; Goshen was first and Scottdale was second.

Actually Silvanus, Goshen College, and Daniel Kauffman converged during that unstable year in Mennonite history, 1922-23. At that time Daniel Kauffman was serving as president of Goshen College and Silvanus was in his first year as a member of the local board of the col-



Silvanus, with his grandchildren, ca. 1947. From left to right, Marilyn Kortemeier, Kathryn Yoder, Silvanus Yoder, Kenneth Yoder, Devon Yoder, Susan Yoder.

lege. Silvanus was to continue to serve on this board for the "new" Goshen until this organ of the college was phased out in 1941.<sup>27</sup>

This local board was an important agency. It was "local" only in that its membership was drawn from the local community, a circumstance which facilitated attendance at its rather frequent meetings. Actually the local board was in many respects the prototype of the later Board of Overseers. Among its functions were the approval of the annual school budget, of faculty salary schedules, of faculty promotions, of faculty leaves, and of the employment of new faculty. It also authorized the borrowing of money for current expenses.<sup>28</sup> In the early years of the reorganized Goshen, the local board even had primary responsibility for fund raising for the College. In 1926 at least some of this responsibility was shifted to the Board of Education.<sup>29</sup> During his twenty-year membership on the local board, Silvanus attended 98 meetings out of a total of 110.<sup>30</sup> For the years 1924-31 he served as its secretary.

Silvanus Yoder was an ardent fan (the term is used advisedly) of Goshen College. He and Susie were generous givers to the college, although their giving appears to have been somewhat sporadic. Responding to a visit of G.L. Bender and Jesse N. Smucker to their home on July 5, 1918, they pledged \$100 to Goshen.<sup>31</sup> And sometime in the mid-twenties C.L. Graber called at the

Silvanus Yoder home and received a \$200 pledge, although it required borrowing the money.<sup>32</sup> These gifts represented about 10% and 15%, respectively, of the net family income for these years.<sup>33</sup> Gifts to the college in other years were probably lower, but nevertheless sacrificial.

Silvanus was a fan of the college in more obvious ways. No public meeting at the college was ignored, if attendance was possible. From 1923, when daughter Rhea graduated, until his final illness in 1963, he attended commencement-week activities every year save one. Even semi-blindness in his last years could not deter him from his routine. Often his attendance included the final chapel and the senior class programs as well as those designed more specifically for the wider public. When the annual Christian Life conferences were introduced, he gave them similar support, missing only three conferences between 1927 and 1960. Although he was never a member of the general board of education he attended its yearly meetings from 1925 through 1934, and a number of times thereafter. Chorus programs were his special delight. In addition to attending such programs on campus, he would often follow the chorus to churches in the surrounding community. He was only a little less faithful to the Lecture-Music series, although for many years he attended these programs regularly also.<sup>34</sup>

When Silvanus retired from farming in 1936, he moved to Middlebury

and placed his membership with the First Mennonite Church there, which was only a stone's throw from his new residence. Although this move put him five miles farther away from Goshen, it did not deter him from attending public functions at the college. Even on Sunday he would sandwich attendance at vespers at the college in the afternoon between morning and evening services at his home church. Sometimes he would do worse (or better); he would come directly to Goshen for church services in the morning and remain there for the entire day. After one such excursion he wrote in a family letter that "Rhea chided me for going to church at Goshen and leaving here. I guess she is at least partly right but then I enjoy the preaching and the associations so much at the college."<sup>35</sup>

Silvanus' greatest investment in Goshen College in terms of direct service was made in these years while he was living in Middlebury, years which coincided with the period following Susie's death in 1936. (Even Susie's funeral, held at the Clinton Frame Mennonite church east of Goshen, was primarily a Goshen College exercise. President S.C. Yoder preached the funeral sermon, Professor Walter Yoder led the congregational singing, and college students presented several musical numbers.)<sup>36</sup> In that same year Silvanus began to assist in the solicitation of funds for the College.

The process of solicitation was simple. Silvanus commonly teamed up with I.E. Burkhart, "Field Secretary" for the College. By prior arrangement with a Mennonite congregation, and following an announcement from the pulpit, Burkhart and Silvanus would call individually on those members of the congregation who might be expected to make a donation to Goshen Col-

lege. Frequently a local driver was assigned to each solicitor; thus two teams would be soliciting simultaneously. Occasionally Silvanus would canvass an entire congregation alone and Burkhart likewise. Following is a tabulation of days spent by Silvanus in solicitation for Goshen College:

No. of days	
1936 . . . . .	17
1937 . . . . .	79
1938 . . . . .	97
1939 . . . . .	32
1940 . . . . .	23
1941 . . . . .	27
1942 . . . . .	5
1943 . . . . .	1
1944 . . . . .	0
1945 . . . . .	84
1946 . . . . .	44
1947 . . . . .	5

Grand Total: 414 days<sup>37</sup>

Wartime limitations on travel may account for the low figures for 1942-44.

Silvanus was anything but a professional fundraiser, but therein may have lain some of his strength. He was a farmer, wore a plain coat, and was by this time the father of five graduates of the college, three of whom had formerly or were then serving in Mennonite church institutions. All of these factors were in his favor as he solicited in the rural congregations of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. In the fall of 1942 the college engaged in a special debt-reduction drive, which included two days of solicitation among selected Conservative Mennonite and Amish families east of Goshen. Silvanus accompanied the solicitor and probably knew some of these people personally. On October 9 he recorded in his diary that they "had a real successful day among the Conservatives and Amish."<sup>38</sup>

It should be remembered that Silvanus was soliciting in a period when Goshen College lacked much of the churchwide acceptance which it enjoyed later. This meant that he would meet many reluctant givers and outright critics of the College. On one occasion in Franconia Conference of eastern Pennsylvania he had a "warm discussion" with a brother about the "'Finished Product' of Goshen College."<sup>39</sup> In Illinois on another occasion he solicited

a farmer in his farmyard. But the farmer was difficult; he preferred to put his offering "in the basket", as was the custom on Sunday morning. Upon this Silvanus picked up a bushel basket standing nearby, held it out, and said, "Well, brother, here is a basket."<sup>40</sup>

Silvanus' experiences as a solicitor, and his personal feelings about this work, are uniquely summed up in a letter, written in verse form, which he wrote to son Paton and wife on February 3, 1938. Said he:

Financial support for the College  
I've sought,  
And canvassed the homes of the  
churches at large,  
To Holdeman, Olive and Yellow  
Creek all  
I've made an appeal to the trust in  
their charge.

Now Olive's response in a measure  
was due  
To the gifts of the Martins in  
generous accord.  
And into the needs of the cause  
that she loved  
A sum of some over two hundred  
she poured.

The gift of the Yellow Creek  
people was less  
No Martins or Weavers with  
generous display.  
A gift of some less than two  
hundred was all  
I gleaned from the Yellow  
Creek people that day.  
I toiled in the homes of the  
Holdemans next  
And answered the critical  
questions that came.  
Cold hearted indifference there  
largely prevailed,  
One hundred and two is the sum  
I can name.

However the canvass has proved  
a success,  
For nearly five hundred has been  
the reward:  
And also the feeling of fellowship's  
warmth  
Was fostered and fanned to a  
mutual concord.<sup>41</sup>

These verses indicate for Silvanus a low-key approach to soliciting and a healthy tolerance for criticism which may account for his long tenure in this work. He served in this capacity for a period of 12 years and until he was 74 years old.



Silvanus Yoder with his granddaughter, Mary Jean Yoder, Christmas 1959.

**Retirement Interests.** During his retirement years, soliciting for Goshen College was Silvanus' most time-consuming activity, but it was not the only outlet for his restless energies. He would turn again to writing poetry for the church. He never tired of it, even to the time of his final illness, and simply would not take "no" for an answer from those who rejected his compositions. Evidently he aspired to achieve for himself, in the writing of poems and hymns, what Grandma Moses succeeded in doing some years later with the paintbrush. He was to have a measure of success, but it was a rather small measure. In 1938 his poem, "The Isles Await the King," which Professor Walter Yoder had put to music, appeared in *Life Songs No. 2*, and in 1957 *The Mennonite* carried his poem, "The Day of Peace."<sup>42</sup> Actually his homey verses dealing with farm and family affairs probably constitute his best efforts at writing poetry.

Silvanus, and Susie equally, should also be credited for making an indirect contribution to the Mennonite church; their children collectively gave about 77 years of service to a variety of agencies of the church of their parents—the India Mission; Goshen College; the Portland, Oregon, Mission; the Orphan's Home at West Liberty, Ohio; and Hesston College. Clearly Silvanus' own emphasis on Christian service exerted a strong influence on the lives of his children. In his system of values, preparing for a life of service—either institutionally based or as an avocation—was about the only justification for acquiring an education. Consequently, when son Jonathan gave up a lucrative medical practice to become a missionary to India, and later when daughter Rhea left her teaching position to teach in the school for missionary children at Woodstock in the same country, he was deeply pleased. Whether it was thus opting for a life of Christian service or some more elementary question of right or wrong, Silvanus seemed never to doubt but that his children would make the right decision.

(— *To be concluded.*)

#### Endnotes

<sup>27</sup> The membership of the local board is listed for the last time in *Goshen College Bulletin*, Catalog No. 24 (1940), 7.

<sup>28</sup> The Minutes of the Local Board of

Goshen College may be found in AMC.

<sup>29</sup> See Minutes of the Local Board of Goshen College for May 15, 1926, and June 8, 1926.

<sup>30</sup> In several instances Silvanus' record of attendance in his diaries and that of the Local Board minutes do not agree. Mostly it is a matter of Silvanus not recording his attendance in his diary. In a couple of instances, however, Silvanus records having attended, whereas the board minutes do not list his name among those in attendance. The figures given are calculated under the assumption that whenever Silvanus' attendance is indicated by either source, it may be considered as confirmed.

<sup>31</sup> Diary, 1918; entry for July 25.

<sup>32</sup> Reminiscence of Paton Yoder, August 1981.

<sup>33</sup> Silvanus kept a careful account of receipts and expenditures for family and farm until 1918. After August of that year only estimates are possible.

<sup>34</sup> Data relating to Silvanus' attendance at public functions at Goshen College are based on a careful tabulation made from his diaries.

<sup>35</sup> File copy of a letter, probably sent to all members of the family, March 19, 1941, AMC.

<sup>36</sup> Diary, 1936, entry for May 14.

<sup>37</sup> Tabulation based on Silvanus' diary entries for these years.

<sup>38</sup> Diary, 1942; entry for Oct. 9.

<sup>39</sup> Diary, 1945; entry for July 24.

<sup>40</sup> Reminiscences of Paton Yoder, August 1981.

<sup>41</sup> Silvanus Yoder to Paton Yoder, Feb. 3, 1938. File copy in the possession of Paton Yoder.

<sup>42</sup> "The Isles Await the King," *Life Songs No. 2* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1938), hymn no. 309; "The Day of Peace," *The Mennonite*, 72 (1957), 663.

## News and Notes

Samuel L. Horst, professor emeritus of history at Eastern Mennonite College, has had his doctoral dissertation, "Education for Manhood: Education of Blacks in Virginia During the Civil War," accepted for publication by University Press of America.

Dr. Horst, who retired from the history faculty in 1984, began his research in Southside Virginia. However, on a fact-finding trip to the New Orleans Amistat Archives Collection Horst discovered the important roles of the Northern Abolitionist Group and the American Missionary Association in the wartime reconstruction of Virginia. This Hampton, Virginia movement was instrumental in educating Blacks during the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Horst's work examines the relationships of the northern whites, the Blacks and the southern whites. His

research shows that the northern whites viewed slavery as a "prison house of ignorance in which the slaves were denied the dignity of manhood." The Blacks agreed with this analysis, but the southern whites did not.

Horst includes a chapter on Quakers and their efforts to help emancipate Blacks. Unlike many other religious groups, Horst says the Quakers did not try to proselytize the Blacks during their relief and education work with them.

The book is expected to be released late this summer.

Currently Horst is working on a diary written by Jacob E. Yoder. This Pennsylvania Mennonite journaled his work while teaching Blacks in Lynchburg, Va., during the reconstruction.

Fewer than 400 copies are left of the first printing of *Religion in Indiana; a Guide to Historical Resources* by L.C. Rudolph and Judith E. Endelman. This is a very useful resource for persons wishing to research, read, or write history about any religious group in Indiana. A second printing is unlikely. This Indiana University Press book costs \$22.50 plus five percent sales tax plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling. A post card request to L.C. Rudolph (IU Main Library, Bloomington, 47405) will bring you an order form providing a twenty percent discount.

The book review, *The Trail to Santa Fe . . .*, by Willard H. Smith, reviewed by Robert Kreider, in the April 1987 *MHB*, was reprinted from *Mennonite Weekly Review*, with permission. (Note a typographical error in the review, last paragraph, line four: the historian's name is Bruce Catton.)

## The Story of Bernhard Dyck and Family

At the Albert Dock, an early Victorian dock at Liverpool, England, there is housed in the new Merseyside Maritime Museum a gallery featuring the "Emigrants to a New World." The gallery "tells the stories of some nine million emigrants, not only British, but also Swedish, Dutch, Russian, German, Lithuanian and Polish, who passed through Liverpool's docks between 1830 and 1930." Included in the

display is "the story of Bernhard Dyck and his family, who travelled in 1878 from Russia to Canada." The Merseyside Maritime Museum is open all year. (The above information is found in: *In Britain*, February 1987 — information, Wilmer Swope).

## Recent Publications

Bixler, Paul and Elma. *Nussbaum/Neuenschwander: history and genealogy of Abraham and Eliza*. Saginaw, Michigan, 1986. Pp. 208. \$10.00. Order from authors, 5042 Clydesdale, Saginaw, MI 48603.

Cordell, Constance Hunsecker. *And Johannes Begat Christian: the descendants of Johannes and Christian Frey of Franklin County, Pennsylvania*. McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, 1985. Pp. 155. \$9.00. Order from author, Route 1, Box 578, McConnellsburg, PA 17233.

Harris, Russel Gingrich. *Descendants and Family History of Johannes Gingrich (1801-1845) & Barbara Gerber Gingrich (1801-1859)*. St. Paul, Minnesota, 1986. Pp. 63. Order from author, 1815 Englewood Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104.

Hochstedler, Mrs. Emmet, Compiler. *Family Record of William K. Miller and Anna Brenneman*. Kalona, Iowa, 1984. Pp. 86. \$3.00. Order from Andy Helmuth, 814 6th St., Kalona, IA 52247.

Lantz, Vergie Ruth Carr. *Descendants of Isaac Ritchie of Virginia*. Bridgewater, Virginia, 1983. Pp. 852. \$35.00. Order from author, Box 95, Broadway, VA 22815.

Markley, Mrs. Rena et al. *Ancestors and Descendants of Thomas Bays Nelson and Frances Miller*. Winona Lake, Indiana, 1986. Pp. 200. \$12.50 plus \$1.00 postage. Order from Glenn Yoder, 68501 CR 37, Millersburg, IN 46543.

Mease, Gladys Price (Nyce) & Gwendolyn Price (Nyce) Hartzel. *The Abraham and Leanna (Godshall) Nyce Family: their ancestors and descendants*. Harleysville, Pennsylvania, 1986. Pp. 109. \$5.00. Order from authors, 223 Godshall Rd., Souder-ton, PA 18964.

Miller, N. Emerson & Ruth. *Lest We Forget*. Bluffton, Ohio, 1986. Pp. 130. Order from authors, 219 Brookwood Dr., Bluffton, OH 45817.

Sauder, Jean Wallace. *Belsley-Sauder: Woodford County, Ill. Ancestors and Descendants 1750-1985 of Christian Belsley & Christian Sauder*. Astoria, Illinois, 1986. Pp. 363. \$29.75. Order from author, 325 Oakwood Circle, Washington, IL 61571.

Schlabach, Alice and Martha Slabach. *I Shall Pass Through This World But Once: A Genealogy of the Enos M. Yoder Family*. 1986. Pp. 251. \$7.00. Order from Andy Helmuth, 814 6th St., Kalona, IA 52247.

Schlabach, Mrs. Owen, Compiler. *Family History of the Descendants of Jeremiah & Veronica Miller 1848-1980*. Trenton, Kentucky, 1980. Pp. 188. \$3.50. Order from Mrs. Roman Miller, 9445 James Rd., Fredericksburg, OH 44627.

Weaver, Monroe A., Compiler. *Emanuel B. Weaver (1864-1948) & Weaver Genealogy 1748-1985*. Holmesville, Ohio, 1986. Pp. 119. Order from compiler, Route 1, Holmesville, OH 44633.

Yoder, Jerry S. and Kathryn Yoder. *Family Records of John M. Yoder & Magdalena Fisher, 1844-1983 and Joseph M. Yoder & Anna Kauffman. 1846-1983*. 1983. Pp. 136. \$4.00. Order from authors, Rt. 2, Box 42, Lovington, IL 61937.

Zeiset, Emma B., Compiler. *George B. Zeiset Family History, 1828-1983*. 1983. Pp. 83. Order from compiler, Route 1, Stevens, PA 17578.

Zook, Harry D., *Zug, Zuck, Zouck, Zook Genealogy*. Baltimore, 1983. Pp. 428. \$15.00. Order from author, P.O. Box 10091, State College, PA 16805-0091.

## Book Reviews

*Marching to Zion*. By Perry A Klopfenstein. 1984. Pp. 653. Available from Isaac Rufener, 325 Hilty Drive, Rittman, OH 44270. \$12.50 plus \$2.00 for postage.

*Marching to Zion* is a history of the Apostolic Christian Church of America, 1847-1982. The ten chapters, plus preliminary and closing materials, tell the story of the 160 congregations plus nine satellite churches in the United States and Canada. Included are pictures of old churches, footnotes, several appendices and an index.

The Mennonite connections to this denomination are many and strong. When speaking of the earliest begin-

nings of this church in America, the author writes: "While the Mennonite families united with Weyeneth in 1847 and likely met together as a group for an undetermined period of time, records indicate they did not 'officially' establish a congregation until about 1850. They did so at 'French Settlement' which today is called Croghan (New York). A few years later some of those families attending the Croghan church, but who lived in the Naumburg area, established a church at Naumburg for the sake of convenience. Thus, these two churches together claim the distinction of being the 'first' church of the Apostolic Christian faith to be established in America." (parenthesis mine)

In what is for me personally an incredible turn of events regarding the Apostolic Christian Church near my parental home in Ohio, the first person to respond to the preaching of Isaac Gehring, who came to the Rittman, Ohio area from the Apostolic Christian church in Sardis in southeastern Ohio, was Anna Steiner, wife of John Steiner, the bishop of the Chippewa Mennonite Church near Rittman. Another was her sister, Elizabeth, and both were daughters of Bishop Daniel Steiner of the Mennonite Church. Anna and most of their thirteen children eventually united with the Apostolic Christian Church while her husband continued to serve the Mennonite Church. Here is an example of an independent spirit that is not associated with the suffragette movement but is rather a case of a vigorous Christian Piety that was not reconcilable with that of her husband in the case of Anna. One can only muse over what the dynamics were that prompted Anna and her sister to seek out an expression of Christianity that would satisfy their religious needs and aspirations in a manner not available to them in the faith of their family.

— Gerald C. Studer

*Meetingplace: A History of the Mennonite Church of Normal, 1912-1987*. By Rachel Waltner Goossen. Privately printed by: The Mennonite Church of Normal, 805 South Cottage, Normal, Illinois 61761. Paperback.

Here is a community that has maintained a creative cohesiveness throughout its seventy-five-year-old history. Seventy five years is an im-

portant juncture for any group; it is also an unusually significant moment for capturing the longer view, interpretively. Rachel Waltner Goossen was able to interview three dozen or so individuals, in this way, gleaning information that otherwise would have been lost twenty-five years down the road. But there is also solid documentation, in the traditional sense of historical interpretation, which can be seen throughout this volume, and in the copious footnotes that accompany this volume.

In a sense the volume can be divided into at least two segments: the chapters which chronicle the basic history, over the decades; and then, the vision that centers in "jubilee," "nurture," the essentialness of meeting as seen in the word "meetingplace," and the ongoing "witness and faith" perspectives.

This is a volume that other congregations can take as a model for writing their own history.

— Leonard Gross

*Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies.*

By Hugh F. Gingerich, PhD and Rachel W. Kreider, MA. Pequea Publishers, 3981 E. Newport Rd., Gordonville, PA 17529, 1986. 858 pp. \$50 plus \$4 postage and handling. Pennsylvania residents, \$3 sales tax.

The book Amish genealogists have needed for years has now been published and is certainly the most definitive, comprehensive and scholarly work on Amish genealogy ever attempted and a work any genealogist would do well to emulate.

All known male line descendants of all known eighteenth century Amish immigrants have been reported down through the generations to those who were married by the time the 1850 census was taken, including their children and their children's spouses. Hence there is a cut-off date ranging from about 1830 to 1880. Almost any person with Amish ancestry who knows who his great-grandparents were will be able to easily and accurately trace each of his Amish ancestral lines back to the immigrant.

Included are birth and death dates with locations, spouses and spouses' parents, and all the children in chronological order. By means of the census references histories of the migrations of families can be inferred. The book is well annotated and tells where one can find the pertinent

data. The authors are well acquainted with the numerous Amish and Mennonite genealogies, have verified data from them where possible, correcting errors, but have relied upon them when primary sources were not available. They have carefully indicated which materials are based upon census records, wills, estate settlements, birth and death certificates, etc., and which are based on secondary sources, circumstantial evidence, or hearsay. Assumptions not supported by direct evidence are indicated by single question marks, conjectures by double question marks.

The book is easy to follow. To organize the materials, the authors have used a modification of the Lincoln system which is an alphanumeric coding with capital letters identifying a family, followed by digits and small letters identifying the generation and position in the family. The book is arranged in the order of these codes, which for the most part, place the families in alphabetic order. There are nearly 17,000 names of coded married persons, and about 2,800 families. (Family in this instance means a man and his wife or wives and all of their children.) The indexes comprise a third of the book and contain every name in the text, footnotes, appendix and addenda in one or another of six sections.

Beautifully printed in an Old Order Amish printshop and beautifully bound, the book is a landmark publication in the genealogical field and is highly recommended for all historical and genealogical collections as well as for individuals who have an Amish background.

— Neva White,  
Library Professor Emeritus,  
Kansas State University

*Mennonites in Ontario, A Mennonite Bicentennial Portrait, 1786-1986.*

Published by a Committee consisting of Vernon Leis, Chairperson; Lorna L. Bergey, Secretary; and Ruby Weber, Treasurer, with the assistance of many others. Available from Lorna Bergey, R.R. #2, New Hamburg, Ontario N0B 2G0, Canada. \$29.95. 175 pp.

This book is designed to be a contemporary self-portrait of Mennonites, Amish and Brethren in Christ in Ontario. The committee sent out notices asking for historical

and current photos and were deluged by the "grassroots participation" when over 2,000 were received. The result is a beautiful hardcover book of mixed black-and-white, old sepia and full-color pictures with a minimum of essential text that together tell the two-hundred-year-old story of the Mennonites who flourish today in this Canadian province. This book will delight and inform people far beyond the Mennonites themselves. As the jacket flap says: "The contemporary diversity of Mennonites will have to stand as a statement in itself in addition to their statement of vigorous faith."

The first two chapters reach briefly into the history. This portrait assumes a fundamental unity among the diversity of the more than twenty autonomous groups that have emerged from the Anabaptist heritage represented in this most populous province of all Canada.

— Gerald C. Studer

*Germanic Folk Culture in Eastern Ohio.*

By Stanley A. Kaufman with Ricky Clark. Walnut Creek, Ohio: German Culture Museum. 1986. 52 pp. \$10.50 postpaid.

This first publication of the German Culture Museum in Walnut Creek, Ohio, surveys the architecture, furniture, quilts and coverlets, fraktur, costume, metalwork and household goods produced by the Swiss and German settlers of Eastern Ohio.

The text is written by Stanley A. Kaufman, Director-Curator of the Museum with Ricky Clark of Oberlin College who is an authority on domestic textiles. Linda Hershberger-Kirk based her calligraphy for titles and section headings on patterns she found in an 1853 German reader. The book features 110 black-and-white and 29 color photographs of objects coming from persons living in the Wayne, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties of eastern Ohio.

While this book also covers the ancestors of the Reformed and Lutheran people of the area, the material culture of the Amish, Amish Mennonites, and the Sonnenberg Swiss Mennonites is thoroughly represented since this three-county area has a substantial number of families of Anabaptist-Mennonite descent.

— Gerald C. Studer



# Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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## Legacy from an Adopted Son: Reflections on the Mennonites in 1946

By Frank Leon Wright, Jr.

*The 1940s were a pivotal and crucial time within Mennonite history, a watershed decade which set new forces in motion, both during the Second World War (Civilian Public Service), and also after the war (relief work of the Mennonite Central Committee especially in Europe).*

*This decade merits the close scrutiny of interpretive analysts, as we approach the fifty-year mark, commemorating the birth of CPS (1940), and its effect on the ongoing Mennonite story.*

*In 1946, just after the end of the World War, a sympathetic observer of, and close participant among the Mennonites, dared to "tell it as it is" — at least from his viewpoint. On balance, in 1946, just where did the Mennonites come out?*

*Granted, this is one man's analysis. Granted, also, it is a rarity that such an "adopted son" would have taken the time to provide critique of the Mennonite spectrum of the Christian groups in North America, first the minus side, and then the plus.*

*We need, in turn, to provide our own critique of this adopted son's perspectives from the vantage point of the 1980s: did he understand us correctly in 1946? And even if he did, is his critique still correct now?*

*This interpretation of the Mennonites in 1946 was taken seriously enough to be duplicated in September of that year. A hundred copies were dispersed at that time among the various Mennonite groups by MCC.*

*We want this "Legacy from an Adopted Son" to speak for itself, first of all. But then, secondly, we need to ask the larger historical question of transformation that came as a result of CPS and MCC — and without a doubt precisely as a direct result of interaction with a Frank Leon Wright, Jr., and many, many others.*

*It is this agenda that may well take the best energies of a number of scholars over the coming years, as we relive, historically, that vital era of our past, the 1940s.*

— Leonard Gross

(Just about three years ago I knew nothing about the people called the Mennonites, but the intervening months and days have given me an unusual opportunity to come to know you Mennonites of many branches. During two-and-a-half years in CPS, I have been among you but not of you. You have done many things for me, and my life among you must be put on the plus side of the ledger in any evaluation of my development to date. In return, I have done very little for you, but I have tried. And now as I go from your immediate presence I would like to leave you a legacy from an adopted son—my evaluation of the Mennonites.)

There is, before you and in you, life and there is death. There is light and there is darkness. There is no insight into the nature of man as apprehended in Christian teaching which is more pointed or more true than that each and all of us are, at one and the same time, children of light and

children of darkness. Throughout the Old and New Testaments this truth is stressed again and again: "God hath made man upright but he has sought out many inventions"—Choose whether ye will serve the gods of the Amorites of the one, true Lord—"The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do."

Perhaps the clearest statement of this truth is found in the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy. (Read Deuteronomy 30: 1-3, 11-19). There also we are told that the solution to this problem is not to be found in heaven nor afar off, but that it is very nigh to us, in our mouths and hearts. It is up to us to decide which shall become dominant, for we know there is both life and death, blessing and cursing, light and darkness within us.

Since I have found you Mennonites to be both children of light and children of darkness, I pray with all my heart that you may choose



Dale Yoder, after his parachute jump, at Smoke Jumpers Camp, Civilian Public Service Unit No. 103, Huson, Montana.

light and life, that you and all Christianity may live and live more faithfully to the best that is within you. To this end I would like to discuss the areas of darkness and the areas of light which I observe among you.

## I

First, the areas of darkness:

1. **Legalism:** Jesus' disciples were unique among disciples in that they had no creed to commit to memory, no formula for salvation, no lists of duties, no prescribed forms of prayer, no intricate system of observances. Instead they had a few very great principles. In fact, Christ was most critical of the legalistic ideas of religion in His own time. He did not say that laws, rules, set observances were wrong. He only said that they detracted from true religion. Mennonites often tend to violate this teaching of Christ in that they often stress legalistic religion—that is, long creeds, a set formula for salvation, a long list of duties, a definite form of prayer and preaching, and a definite system of observances. Let me give three illustrations of the results of legalism in your religion.

a) **Literalism:** You tend to become people of The Book, not people of His Person. If we were told that the Word became printer's ink, then would we follow a code; but the Word became flesh and we follow a character, a living mind instead of a fixed letter. Paul understood the danger of literalism when he wrote the Corinthians that they were to be ministers not of the letter of the Gospel, but of the spirit of it, "for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." The Bible becomes a dead book among you because you follow the letter that killeth rather than the spirit which giveth life.

b) **Stultified religion** which hampers true fellowship with God: Mennonites often tend to have a religion of the "cut flower" variety which has the appearance of life but no roots—a form without substance,

habit and custom without conviction and knowledge. Thus you think certain mannerisms are essential to prayer. You are prompted to ask "Are you saved?", by which you mean have I passed through steps a, b, c and d, not whether I have been touched by the Spirit of Christ and have allowed His Spirit to be active in my life. The peril of this manner of thinking is that you reduce vital religious experience into a formula of explanation; and men, following your teachings, grasp the formulas and suppose themselves to have had the experiences. Thus they stop short of a vital experience of fellowship with God.

c) **Codified religious actions:** You tend to describe morality in the form of external moral laws, thus destroying the true meaning of morality. "And you make void the Word of God because of your traditions" as Christ told the Pharisees. (Matt. 15:6). Then you become blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You give minor matters of conduct (which have some importance, but which after all are not major matters) first position in your thoughts while you overlook great evils, either because you are accustomed to them or you pay full attention to the gnats. Thus you tend to be negative. You have a long list of "don'ts" with very few "do's." You spend much time and effort stating what you do not believe, forgetting that what one does not believe will never save a man, and therefore, can remain unspoken.

These legalistic attitudes all add up to lack of understanding of many religious truths, because you accept them on the basis of authority without testing and sifting them to make them your own. It is for this reason that there were many Mennonite men in CPS who had no knowledge or understanding of why they were there except that the church sent them there. The acceptance of external authority allows you to speak the truth without thinking it or understanding it. Freedom is the

chance God took when He made man, and freedom is the chance man must take if he is to know God. But you have made a legalistic religion of Christianity and thus have stripped it of its freedom. You have become deserving of Christ's comment, "Woe unto you, lawyers (legalists), for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." (Luke 11:52).

2. **Divisions and Strife.** Out of your attempt to reduce Christianity to a set of rules, to a legalistic system, have inevitably come divisions and strife. To say that we shall preserve what we have by setting up rules to prevent change is not a way to prevent change, but to insure that change, when it comes, will be violent. And change inevitably does come, for it is a law of life that one must either grow or die and cannot stand still. Your violent changes have rent you asunder so that the mere 200,000 of you in this country are in 17 separate churches. (Not all of the churches are splits or divisions but all indicate lack of union.)

Certainly there is no doubt that Christians are expected to dwell together in unity—a unity not of sameness but a unity which transcends differences. Paul says that unity in Christ transcends differences of nation, race, sex, status in life, customs, talents, abilities, duties, yes, even preachers. Christians are to be one body in spite of being many members (1 Cor. 12) "The kingdom of God is like unto a net, which was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind." (Matt. 13:47). You have failed to understand this Christian idea of unity in and above differences. So you have a tradition of strife and division which makes a mockery of love and fellowship as a way of life. For, "By this shall all men know that ye are Christ's disciples, that ye have love one to another." (John 13:35).

There is an old Biblical proverb (Proverbs 20:3) which says it is an

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CPS Unit No. 90, Ypsilanti, Michigan: 'Bull-session' in dormitory in the single men's quarters on A 2-1. Left to right.: Daniel Diener, Ralph Buckwalter, Lloyd Conrad, Lawrence Hilty, Lawrence Greaser.

honor for man to cease from strife. You Mennonites have long enough been burdened with the tradition of strife. Go now and claim the honor of ceasing from it.

**3. Self-righteousness.** Another old Biblical proverb says that, "Only by pride cometh contention." (Proverbs 13:10). Certainly some of the contention in the Mennonite church has come through pride, through self-righteousness. Early in my CPS experience, I was amused by the story, told by some Mennonite friends, about a person who was privileged to visit heaven during his lifetime and return to earth. After this person had seen all of heaven except for one area surrounded by a high wall, he asked to be admitted into the walled area. He was allowed to visit this area upon the condition that he would speak to no one and ask no questions. He found the walled area identical with all the rest of heaven and asked his guide afterwards why such secrecy was observed. The guide replied, "Oh, that is the special part of heaven reserved for Mennonites. We are afraid it would spoil it for them if they knew that anyone else got into heaven."

That is a far-fetched story, yet it makes a truthful criticism of you Mennonites. The teachings against self-righteousness are so clear that I need only mention a few. The prophet singles out as one to be rejected, he who said, "Stand by thyself, come

not near me; for I am holier than thou." (Ps. 65:5). A few times in CPS I have actually heard words to this effect. Often have I felt this attitude clearly expressed in words and deeds of fellow campers and visiting ministers. But even worse than that, I have noticed attitudes—yes, heard prayers—of good Mennonites which paraphrased almost exactly that prayer which Christ condemned as an unjustified prayer: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." (Luke 18:11).

This self-righteousness may be the basis for your tendency to throw labels on people and things and then to assume that no good can come out of them. To you there is no gray, no part-black and part-white. All is either black or white—white if it agrees with you; totally black if it disagrees in any particular. Such an attitude keeps you from much truth, from some of the best in the Christian tradition. Every man should beware when he begins to think he has possessed all the land of Christian meaning and teaching, for all Christianity has yet only built a cabin in the wilderness and cleared a small place for a pasture and garden. All around us is uncleared, unknown forest. No man or group can be proud of his little corner of truth, for we have not yet all the truth that the Holy Spirit is to lead us into; and "if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know." (1 Cor. 8:2).

#### 4. Compartmentalization.

Another source of darkness and death is your refusal to see life whole. Sometimes I think you Mennonites have misinterpreted the idea that Christ came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly, and declared instead that He came that we might avoid life and avoid it more astutely.

Many important areas of life are detached from your religious concern, from Christ's influence. Perhaps, the most flagrant examples are the Mennonite farmers who testify against smoking but make a large portion of their income by raising tobacco. Economic life in such cases is entirely separate from the religious life. Examples could also be mentioned from the social, recreational, educational and cultural areas of life.

The Christian life dare not be departmentalized like this with the church claiming it is concerned only with worship. To do so is to be like the little boy who was asked why he refused to pull his cold feet under the bedcovers and replied, "You don't think I want those old, cold things in bed with me, do you?"

It is impossible to escape the whole of life. It will be with us whether we want it or not. Some persons are like a brush heap, a helter-skelter, miscellaneous pile of twigs and branches. Others are like a tree that includes some materials, but is organized into a vital, growing entity. That is the secret—if thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light. (Matt. 6:22). Man must have an organizing center for the whole of life. The part trying to be the whole is the essence of sin.

Jesus recognized this when he went about teaching, preaching and healing, and great multitudes followed him. (Matt. 4:23-25). Mental, spiritual, physical and social life are all included, and it is the eternal problem of the Christian life to bring the whole of life into harmony with the spirit of Christ. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all else shall be added unto you"—that is, your whole life (physical, mental, social and spiritual) and all life's problems will come under the guidance of God if you enter into His kingdom. You divide life, compartmentalize life, and let God speak to only a part of it. You must come to regard life whole.

5. **Quietism.** Finally, there is quietism, complacency, inactivity. (All else might be forgiven but can this?) Two streams of evil flow down across the sands of time, both designed by the enemy of all souls to stop the work of God in the hearts of men and to hinder the coming of the kingdom of God. One of them is a raging, aggressive evil—and it I do not find among you. The other is quiet, and smooth and very restful in appearance—it is simply unconcern, inertia, inactivity, the indifference of good people. And this I find very prevalent among you.

Ed G. Kaufman in *Our Mission As A Church of Christ* points out this tendency. He says that persecution and isolation caused the original interest in winning others to decrease until it was practically extinct among the Mennonites by the end of the 16th century. Previously the Mennonites had enthusiasm for the world mission, but after this they fled from the world and put more of their energies in the creation and application of strict rules of living (legalism, you see). Kaufman goes on to say that, after 300 years of isolation, Mennonite groups are being powerfully stimulated by the modern missionary interest and are finding it a means of contact with the outside world. Mr. Kaufman is right, there is a reawakening from the quietism which has lulled Mennonites for over 300 years, but still the majority of you lie sleeping.

Yet nothing is plainer than that Christianity is a religion of action. It is not enough for a Christian to live and let live; he must live and help live. The priest and the Levite claimed faith in love but they were condemned because their actions denied their claim. The son was accounted a doer of the will of the father when he acted even though he said he would not act. When questioned about how to inherit eternal life Christ said, "This *do*, and thou shalt live." "Whosoever thus *doeth* the will of My Father in heaven, the same is My brother and sister." It is not he that saith, "Lord, Lord" who may enter into the kingdom, but he who *doeth* the will of the Father.

Religion can itself become one of the most selfish influences in life when this activity, this doing, is overlooked. Men can accept religion, cleave to it, not from unselfish motives, but solely for the inward

peace, quieted conscience and radiant hope they can get from it. Then religion becomes a sedative, not a stimulus; not an inspiration to service, but a substitute for it. No man can believe in the brotherhood of men and be comfortable; it is a doctrine that takes away all our cushions and leaves us with a cross.

You Mennonites have allowed this quietism to creep in among you so slyly that most of you are unconcerned about your own unconcern. You have been almost proud of your inactivity and indifference to the needs of others. In your defense you could always say, "What have I done?" But Christianity condemns you if you answer that question by saying, "Nothing." Dives in hell was being punished for his failure to help Lazarus. The wicked servant was cast out into outer darkness for doing nothing—he had only hid his talent in a napkin and waited. The foolish virgins had done well, but had failed to do enough. The judgment scene shows a group of people being sent into death, "Inasmuch as they did nothing." The church at Laodecia was rebuked because it was neither hot nor cold.

You Mennonites, all of you, have lain too long by the side of the road preoccupied with your own salvation. You have sung too long unto Christ, "Hide Me, Blessed Savior, Hide Me" when Christ was waiting to hear, "Rise Up, O Men of God," "Go Labor On, Spend and Be Spent." Again and again you need to

slash across your complacency and inactivity with that pertinent question which has been put to Christian disciples before: "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" (Acts 1:11). There is a job to do today and you should be actively going about it.

## II

If you go about this job you will do so with some great strengths which are to be found among you. You are children of light as well as children of darkness. You have some elements within you which fit you well to bring into Christianity that which it needs in this critical hour. Therefore let us consider the areas of light.

**1. Resistance to Secularism.** Our world is one deserving of the comment which God made about the ancient Israelites through Jeremiah; "My people have forsaken Me, the Fountain of Living Waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." (Jeremiah 2:3). Certainly it is clear that people—even those who claim to be God's people—have forsaken the Fountain of Living Waters and have instead put their faith in science, political programs, economic theories. But such broken cisterns can hold no water, certainly not atomic energy.

You Mennonites have resisted this tendency better than others. In some ways, as previously indicated, you have forsaken certain aspects of God;



Women's Summer Service Unit, Howard, Rhode Island (Camp No. 85).

but you have not put God out of your lives entirely. You maintain a sincere desire to be really Christian, to keep God central in at least a portion of your life.

Nor have you tended to put your faith in other things. You have emphasized the Christian doctrine of being non-conformed to the world, and thus resisted the temptation to place your faith in the schemes and plans of the world. A true Christian is torn loose from earthly attachments and ambitions but at the same time he is quickened to a painful concern for the world. The resistance you have shown to being *of* the world will be a great thing if you drop the cloak of quietism and learn to be *in* the world but not *of* the world. In such a way you could reemphasize and clarify for all Christianity the value and truth of this essential doctrine.

**2. Clarity of Belief.** Mennonites do have a definite doctrine, and you are clear about it while many are indefinite and obscure about what they believe. Certainly clear, concise living and thinking cannot be done on the basis of a hazy, indeterminate background of belief. One needs to know the certainty of those things wherein he has been instructed; he needs to be fully persuaded in his own mind. (Luke 1:4, Romans 14:5).

Perhaps one of the most difficult things to do is to combine tolerance with conviction—but it is one of the most necessary. I remember describing those men whom I respected most in CPS as men who had an “open mind and closed convictions.” That is the ideal—clarity of belief and an open mind; certainty today but willingness to grow and know more tomorrow. You Mennonites have a clarity of belief which is needed but lacking among most Christian groups. If you can keep this clarity and at the same time peel off the legalistic ideals which make you intolerant and which make your beliefs subject to misinterpretation, then you can provide a great and creative impetus within Christian thought.

**3. Willingness to Sacrifice for Belief.** This is the very heart of the Gospel, but it has been forsaken in many places. Whosoever would come after Christ is told to deny himself, take up his cross and follow. (Mark 8:34). One version emphasizes the need to sacrifice by saying a follower

of Christ must deny himself *daily*. (Luke 9:23).

Day by day following of your beliefs, even at a cost to you and your own interests, is one of your greatest strengths. To lose your life in this way is the only way to save it. But what do we find in our world today? We find willingness to sacrifice for beliefs, but what beliefs! For the body beautiful: the people of this country spend two-and-a-half times as much on cosmetics as on all church and charity. For pleasurable escapes: we spend 10 times as much on tobacco and liquor as on all church and charity. For war and preparation for war: we spend 100 times as much. When this is true in a country where over 50% of the persons are members of a Christian church, then the Christian church has become an echo instead of a voice, a thermometer taking the temperature of the times instead of a thermostat regulating it.

Mennonites have not followed this trend to any great extent. You have increasingly shown your willingness to sacrifice for your beliefs in terms of finance, personal comfort and loss of young people. This willingness to sacrifice is a great strength and is central to any interpretation of the Christian faith.

**4. Adherence to “Overcome-evil-with-good.”** Another basic doctrine being overlooked and forsaken by most Christian churches and people is that of overcoming evil with good. If this doctrine is preached it is not lived, and the fallacy of most philosophies is the philosopher. Generally we have used coercive and inferior methods in an effort to attain good ends. We have tried to legislate temperance into the character of every man, tried to gain world peace by conquest and self-isolation, tried to curtail crime by a penal system of punishment and retribution.

Christ also sought temperance, peace and cessation from crime, but His methods were not legislation, conquest, withdrawal or punishment. His methods are indicated by the fact that He went about teaching, preaching, healing and feeding. He changed man from within but also improved man’s physical environment. His spirit was strength so sure of itself that it could afford to be gentle—His method was to overcome evil with good.

You people who have not put your

faith in inferior methods but who have stressed overcome-evil-with-good can bring a clear testimony to bear on the need for using means which are suitable to desired ends. If you refuse to retreat from the world (to rest in quietism) but maintain your beliefs in the face of the world, you can point the way steadfastly to the one way of attaining good—by overcoming evil with good. It is such a faith that can gain the victory which overcometh the world.

**5. Awakened Social Conscience and Increased Intellectual Awareness.** Even with these other sources of light within you there would be little hope of your making a vital contribution to the stream of Christianity at this point in history were it not for your awakening social conscience and increasing intellectual awareness. For years you have tended to be people of limited interests, living your lives behind barriers—social barriers which excluded all humanity except for a select and unchallenging few; intellectual barriers which never admitted a stray unconventional idea; moral barriers which nourished the mammon of self-righteousness; and theological barriers which shut out the sunlight of a broad charity and service. This situation is changing. It has changed among many of your leaders and is changing among the rank and file.

With regard to education and learning, you are beginning to realize that it was no mistake that Christ added “*mind*” to the old law of Deuteronomy about loving God with heart, soul and might. (Deuteronomy 6:5, Luke 10:27). You are discovering that truth and virtue can not be separated, that intelligence and morality belong together and neither can stand alone. In short, your intellectual awareness is being sharpened.

At the same time (as Ed G. Kaufman pointed out in the previous quotation) missionary interest is moving among you. This is not just a narrow missionary interest but is one which impels you to serve all the needs of all the people among whom you work. The Gulfport, Miss., and Puerto Rico projects certainly seem to be missions growing out of an aroused social conscience. You are realizing that anyone who can look out upon the needs and ills of our society and not be moved to action by

a compelling compassion is wholly without the spirit of Christ, regardless of how impeccable his personal morals may be or how correct his theology. Your increasing intellectual awareness and awakening social conscience are the sparks which can ignite the power of the light and life that is within you.

Break forth, ye Mennonites! Enlarge the place of your habitation and stretch forth the covering of your influence! Spare not: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes! For thou canst spread abroad a powerful influence. Your light can guide the nations and bring life where there is now desolation. (Isaiah 54:2-3).

This challenge issued to the ancient Israelites is applicable to you Mennonites in this day and age. You stand before its demand blessed with life and light, yet cursed with death and

darkness. You can choose which element shall be dominant. This legacy from an adopted son is bequeathed to you in the hope and prayer that you may recognize the challenge and answer it in the spirit of light and life.

"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19).

*In 1946 Frank Leon Wright, Jr. lived in Baltimore, Maryland, where he was on the staff of Johns Hopkins University as a YMCA secretary. He was trained and experienced in the field of personal counseling. During CPS he served as Educational Director of an MCC hospital unit. He wrote the above paper after resuming his work at Johns Hopkins University in August 1946.*

And with his Ada experience he could have identified with the more sophisticated minority. Furthermore, he had close relatives who were supporting the liberal position.

There were also some signs of liberalism in Silvanus' own home. Susie had brought an organ into the home with her at the time of her marriage, and the older children had taken lessons on it for a number of years, lessons for which their parents paid. In 1917 Rhea bought a phonograph for herself and the family and in 1924 Ruth followed with a piano, in each case with the previous consent of Silvanus.

In matters of dress Silvanus' criterion of value was that of utility, rather than cultural tradition. Thus when stocking caps became popular among high school girls he defended the innovation, in the face of criticism from churchmen, on the basis that such a cap afforded much better protection from the cold than did the traditional Mennonite hood or bonnet. When he applied the same yardstick to high school class pins he found them lacking. He was adamant that no money was to be spent on such trifles. Although both daughters dressed as liberally as the restrictive Mennonite dress code allowed (Rhea may have fractured it while living in Illinois), he never criticized them nor required any modification.<sup>46</sup>

On the other hand, Silvanus was also subject to conservative influences. There were his father's example of respect for constituted authority and the influence of his bishop, D.J. Johns. Revivalists were calling on the men in their audiences to don the plain coat, and on both sexes to shun the wearing of jewelry, and in some instances, to destroy their musical instruments. While Silvanus was selective in accepting these admonitions, he did respond to some of them. One Sunday morning on the way to church in the family buggy, he took off his gold watch chain and threw it by the roadside. Soon thereafter he replaced the gold casing of the watch itself with a silver casing. Finally in 1919, at the suggestion of his bishop—but probably with less conviction than that which prompted the gold watch episode—he began to wear a plain coat.<sup>47</sup>

Although there were both liberal and conservative influences operating on Silvanus, there was no dilemma. He openly supported constituted

### III. Silvanus Yoder: Mennonite Layman and Farmer Conclusion

By Paton Yoder

#### Personal Spiritual Pilgrimage.

Silvanus' spiritual pilgrimage, begun informally on the knee of his devout mother and formally in 1889 when he confessed Christ during the first series of "protracted meetings" ever held at Oak Grove, deserves further attention. His school experience at Smithville and at Ohio Normal University made him no less Amish Mennonite, but it clearly broadened his tolerance for people of other denominations. In these schools he had come to admire, almost inordinately, many of his professors, especially those who freely expressed their Christian faith.<sup>43</sup>

After his marriage and move to Indiana (1896-97) he came under the influence of Bishop D.J. Johns—under whose preaching he had made his original commitment back at Oak Grove—and that of his son, Ira Johns. Together the two, Ira and Silvanus, came to espouse the doctrine of premillennialism with considerable conviction. Professing Christians who were not of this persuasion were automatically put in the category of postmillennialists; there were no authentic a-millennialists.

Consequently, when Lester Hostetler of Walnut Creek, Ohio, came to Middlebury in 1921 to participate in a Bible conference, Silvanus listened to him and then characterized his position on the Second Coming of Christ as a "Post Millennium view."<sup>44</sup>

But a more disturbing question was troubling the Mennonite Church and its members including Silvanus, in 1921, a question which was to produce a schism and close Goshen College in 1923. On the surface the issues were related primarily to dress, particularly women's dress. But there was a more subtle dimension. A minority of younger, educated leaders was pretty much arrayed against the established order as represented by the Indiana Michigan Church Conference and its bishops. Finally, there were accusations that there were traces of modernism at Goshen College, and some toleration for the theory of evolution.<sup>45</sup>

As the crisis deepened Silvanus could have felt that he was facing a dilemma. On the one hand, his father and his father's family had been liberally inclined in matters of dress.

authority. He made a personal appeal to his brother-in-law, Simon Yoder, who was leading the liberal group at the Middlebury Church, to "stay with the church."<sup>48</sup> He also supported the decision to close Goshen College for a year and pled with daughter Rhea (without avail) to withdraw her name from a student body protest to the Board of Education.<sup>49</sup> Silvanus' abhorrence of congregational and denominational dissention predated his 1923 experience, but there can be no doubt that this ordeal strengthened this feeling.

In the years after the 1923 crisis Silvanus came increasingly under the influence of the "new" Goshen and also that of his children, accepting the relatively liberal position of Goshen College on matters pertaining to dress. (Eventually, at 75 years of age, he discarded his plain coat and put on a four-in-hand tie.) He likewise supported with enthusiasm the trend toward fundamentalism at Goshen. Harry Rimmer's lectures on biblical archaeology and science-and-the-Bible, for example, delighted him.

Although Silvanus could become dispirited, especially during a period of a few years in mid-life, in matters pertaining to the church he became increasingly optimistic as he grew older. One of his better articles in the *Gospel Herald* was about "The Unfinished Sermon"<sup>50</sup> to which he had recently listened. The preacher had been very pessimistic about the future of the Mennonite Church and had concluded his sermon on that note. Silvanus compared him to Elijah as he sat under the juniper tree and suggested that he was underestimating the power of God and the strength of dedicated people in the Church. The Elijah story, he observed, did not end under the juniper tree.

Silvanus' spiritual pilgrimage had entered a new phase when he encountered "modernism," perhaps sometime back in the early twenties. Of course he would have none of it. Even "old" Goshen must be carefully scrutinized for evidences of modernism. As for Bluffton College, he was quite convinced that it had been overtaken by that heresy. So when a student recruiter from Bluffton College tried to recruit son Samuel (it was the year Goshen was closed), Silvanus responded with considerable feeling that he would rather

send his son to a state university than to Bluffton.<sup>51</sup> Later, while Samuel was attending Goshen College, his father counseled him to drop his plans to visit Bluffton College over a weekend. Samuel complied.<sup>52</sup>

Silvanus was a stalwart foe of modernism for the remainder of his life. In 1936 he wrote in the *Herald* that "our state colleges and universities reek with modernism and infidelity," and then added that "you positively cannot afford to lose the bright prospects of an intelligent and scholarly young man or woman in the drift of modernism."<sup>53</sup> Much later, soon after the sudden failure of his eyesight in 1958, he was dismayed to find that the series of recorded Bible lectures which had been loaned to him from the state library "ranked [reeked] with modernism of the vilest kind."<sup>54</sup>



Silvanus Yoder, ca. 1960.

The modernist-fundamentalist controversy, *per se*, however, did not preempt very much of Silvanus' time or attention. Most of his articles in the *Gospel Herald* were short, single-idea thrusts on a variety of topics and biblical themes, not one of which could be described as polemical. Nevertheless he enjoyed attending fundamentalist-oriented Bible conferences. Already in 1944 and 1945 he had attended Founders' Week at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and from 1950 through 1958 his attendance there was interrupted only in 1953. It required the failure of his eyesight at age 86 to stop these yearly excursions to Chicago.

The annual Winona Lake Bible

conferences each summer likewise attracted Silvanus. In this case even the failure of his eyesight did not prevent his attending there if he could find transportation and a companion. His attendance at Winona peaked in 1956 when he attended for a total of 31 days.<sup>55</sup>

Silvanus found much edification in these conferences. In 1954 he returned from Moody's "with a deep appreciation for the sermons and associations" which had come to him in this experience. Then he concluded his diary entry with: "I thank our Heavenly Father for this privilege."<sup>56</sup> When he could no longer attend the Moody event in person he listened by radio and "my heart was thrilled."<sup>57</sup> In a similar vein he recorded his sentiments about one of the Winona Lake Bible conferences. "To me," he said, "this conference was a great delight."<sup>58</sup>

As he moved through his retirement years Silvanus mellowed much in spirit. He hobnobbed freely with people of whom he had earlier been somewhat critical. He found it in himself to restore fully relationships with relatives and others which had become distant at the time of the 1923 schism. Even toward Bluffton his attitude became considerably more benign.<sup>59</sup>

Silvanus' spiritual pilgrimage follows a familiar path, taken by many of his contemporaries. As a young man he emerged out of the renewal which came to the Mennonites and Amish Mennonites in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Although he was on the liberal side of center (but not really very far from center) in his denomination, he never gave consideration to rebelling against it or leaving it. In the second half of his life he followed his denomination as it moved toward fundamentalism, possibly contributing somewhat to the trend himself.

Perhaps Silvanus should be charged with syncretism, but he, himself, could never have understood this accusation. To him, his beliefs constituted a compact package, thoroughly biblical, neatly harmonious, and wholly satisfying.

Silvanus was neither a leader nor an innovator (with the significant exception of his participation in structuring a new form of brotherhood aid); he was neither a creative thinker nor a proud philosopher. In terms of

any kind of distinctiveness, at the greatest stretch of the imagination he was only a "minor prophet." But he was a servant of the Mennonite Church.

### Endnotes

- 43 "Autobiography," in *Silvanus and Susie*, pp. A-19 - A-20; "Pioneer Mennonite Students," *MHB* 3 (June 1942), 3.
- 44 Diary, 1921; entry for Feb. 5.
- 45 This analysis is based largely on the reminiscences of Silvanus' children, August 1981.
- 46 Reminiscences of Rhea Yoder and Ruth Yoder Kortemeier, August 1981.
- 47 Reminiscences of Rhea Yoder, Ruth Yoder Kortemeier, and Jonathan Yoder, August 1981.
- 48 Diary, 1923; entry for Oct. 6.
- 49 Reminiscence of Rhea Yoder, August 1981.
- 50 "The Unfinished Sermon," *Gospel Herald*, 25 (1932-33), 611.
- 51 Reminiscence of Paton Yoder, August 1981.
- 52 Reminiscence of Silas Smucker, Goshen, Ind., July 1981.
- 53 "Thoughts on the Home," *Gospel Herald*, 29 (1936-37), 646.
- 54 Diary, 1958; entry for June 6.
- 55 Diary, June, July, August, 1956.
- 56 Diary, 1954; entry for Feb. 6.
- 57 Diary, 1961; entry for Jan. 31.
- 58 Diary, 1957; entry for Sept. 2.
- 59 Reminiscences of Silvanus' children, August 1981.

### Book Reviews

*Pilgrims of a Common Life*. By Trevor J. Saxby. Herald Press: Scottsdale, Pa./Kitchner, Ont. 1987. 208 pp. \$17.95 (\$24.95 Canadian).

Author Saxby's purpose in *Pilgrims* . . . is straightforward and singular, namely, to discuss and survey "Christian Community of Goods Through the Centuries," which is the subtitle of the book. He does this as one who admittedly has wrestled with the issues himself and has come out clearly convinced that communalism is indeed the consistent expression of our Lord and the Apostles' teachings and example. He writes as a member of the New Creation Christian Community, also known as the Jesus Fellowship Church, Baptist, of Cornhill Manor, Pattishall, Northamptonshire, England.

Saxby sees the alternatives of Christian response as basically two: either "the Jerusalem model with all things in common" or "the Pauline stance of personal stewardship and contribution in case of need." In his strong preference for the Jerusalem model he resorts to mild cynicism at times but generally he exemplifies a reasonably balanced view, and recognizes that "common to both . . . is a growing appreciation of the covenant."

My review to this point may strike most readers as mildly negative when in fact I have been long and warmly drawn to this expression of Christianity as the most consistent fulfillment of Christ's Spirit and teachings. I can only admit that my own response to the biblical evidence is like his characterization of Zinzendorf's which is that his attitude was ambivalent. Unlike Zinzendorf, I do not believe that the Jerusalem Church was not a blueprint for all time nor that the reality is the mystical body. My ambivalence settles rather at the point at which Wesley cautioned communalists, namely, that they must be eager to witness and not to be withdrawn. In this the former Society of Brothers (now fully merged with the Hutterian Brethren) has maintained a far better witness to the world than the Hutterites have.

The eleven chapters of this book begin with *The Vision and the Obstacles*; and then proceed to survey *The Scriptural Position, Part I: The Old Covenant Fulfilled in the New*; then *Part II: Jerusalem and Beyond*; and then move on *From the Close of the New Testament to Constantine, to The Early Middle Ages, The Late Middle Ages, The Reformation, The 17th and 18th Centuries, The 19th Century, The 20th Century*; concluding with a chapter on *The Characteristics of Christian Community*; followed by an Appendix giving a brief history of the community Saxby is a part of; followed by *Notes, Bibliography, and indices*.

I would differ with the judgment of Donald F. Durnbaugh in the Foreword in that I did find the descriptions of communal movements through the centuries too brief. But I also found the author introducing me to some communal expressions that I had not known of before, such as *The Common Life in India, and Aiyetoro*.

I was intrigued by both his listing of the marks of true Christian community and by his reasons for the failure of many of them which included such items as excessive writing, where he asserted that some groups have expended so much spiritual and financial substance in answering every criticism brought against them that spiritual decline set in. Or again when he identified pride in leaders and commented that the danger of man-centeredness is always present.

This is an excellent introduction to anyone unfamiliar with the communal strand that persists all the way down through the history of Christianity from Acts 2 & 4. And it contributes a vigorous and persuasive argument to all who are open to what the Spirit has to say to the churches in this generation.

—Gerald C. Studer

### Follow the Path of Jesus

In Switzerland a cave in the mountains provided a safe meetinghouse for the worship of the early Anabaptists. In America the famous Mammoth Cave in Kentucky was the inspiration for the writing of a favorite hymn of the (Old) Mennonites. It was in the year 1871 that Baptist minister Christopher Ruby Blackall of Chicago, Illinois, made a visit to the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. He observed that a person could easily become lost if the established paths in the cave were not faithfully followed. On the return trip home to Chicago on the train, Blackall wrote "Follow the Paths of Jesus."

When the *Mennonite Hymns and Tunes* hymnal committee was compiling that song book in 1889 and 1890, Blackall's hymn was selected. The word "paths" was made singular to read "path." Blackall's third verse was dropped and the hymnal committee, or a member of the committee, wrote a new third verse. The committee also provided a new tune probably of Mennonite composing. The third verse condenses Anabaptist and Mennonite theology in a short, well-remembered statement of faith that can be sung.

—Wilmer D. Swope